

ROYAL BOTTOM-WIPER THE WORST JOBS IN HISTORY



HISTORY

REVEALED

BRINGING THE PAST TO LIFE
ISSUE 11 // CHRISTMAS 2014 // £3.99



BATTLE OF TRAFALGAR

ROSA PARKS
American Civil Rights icon



PLUS

GUNFIGHT AT THE OK CORRAL

THE BERLIN BLOCKADE

GOTHIC CHURCHES

WILFRED THESIGER:
ARABIAN EXPLORER



THE SEARCH FOR

KING ARTHUR

AND THE STORY OF BRITAIN IN
THE DARK AGES

CHRISTMAS SPECIAL ISSUE

CROMWELL

Did he really ban Christmas?

WHO WAS GOOD KING WENCESLAS?

1914: PEACE IN THE TRENCHES

The truth of the truce



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1888

The Central News Office in London received a letter signed by 'Jack the Ripper'.



1926

A sheep found buried under 10 tons of coal was rescued and adopted as a mascot by the coal tippers at Swansea Docks.



THE TOP-HAT IN 1797.

The *Hatter's Gazette* reprints from an old journal, dated January 16th, 1797, the following amusing account of the wearing of the first silk hat in London:—"John Hetherington, haberdasher, of the Strand, was arraigned before the Lord Mayor yesterday on a charge of breach of the peace, and inciting to riot, and was required to give bonds in the sum of £500. It was in evidence that Mr. Hetherington, who is well connected, appeared on the public highway wearing upon his head what he called a silk hat (which was offered in evidence), a tall structure having a shiny lustre, and calculated to frighten timid people. As a matter

1797

A gentleman was arrested for breach of the peace after wearing the first top hat and causing several women to faint.



THE NOTTINGHAM EVENING

FACSIMILES OF "JACK THE RIPPER'S" LETTER AND POST CARD.

25 Sept 1888

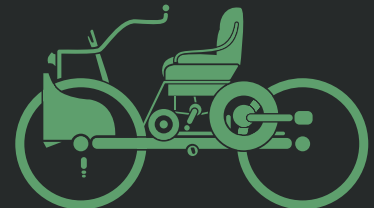
Dear Boss
I keep on hearing the police have caught me, but they won't fix me just yet. I have laughed when they look so clever and talk about being on the right track. That poor about leather apron gave me real

THE QUESTION OF HORSELESS CARRIAGES.—

At the Farnbridge Police-court, Mr. Walter Arnold, the owner of a horseless carriage, was summoned on four informations with reference to using a horseless carriage on the highway. The first was for using a locomotive without a horse from the County Council, the second for having less than three persons in charge of the same, the third for going at a greater rate than two miles an hour, and the fourth for not having his name and address placed on the machine.—The evidence was that the carriage was going at the rate of eight miles an hour.—Mr. Cripps, who defended, contended that the machine was not one contemplated when the Locomotive Acts were passed, and said that

1896

Walter Arnold became the first British person to be fined for speeding in January. He had been travelling at a reckless 8mph.



SNEEP AS MASCOT

Coal Tippers Adopt an Animal They Saved

The sheep which was found buried under ten tons of coal in a railway truck at Swansea Docks has been presented to the coal tippers by the animal's owner.

This is in recognition and appreciation of the humane manner in which they cared for and treated the exhausted animal.

When found it had apparently been in the truck six days, covered all the time by the coal.

The coal tippers have decided to keep the animal as a mascot.

police as a constable, transferred to the Public Department at Scotland it was soon discovered to have an amazing aptitude for traffic problems. In the he served for 36 years.

NEWPORT-PARIS

Sick Woman's Journey by Motor and Plane

An aeroplane fitted as figured in a remarkable Newport (Mon.) to Paris terday in the space of minutes.

The passenger, a sick

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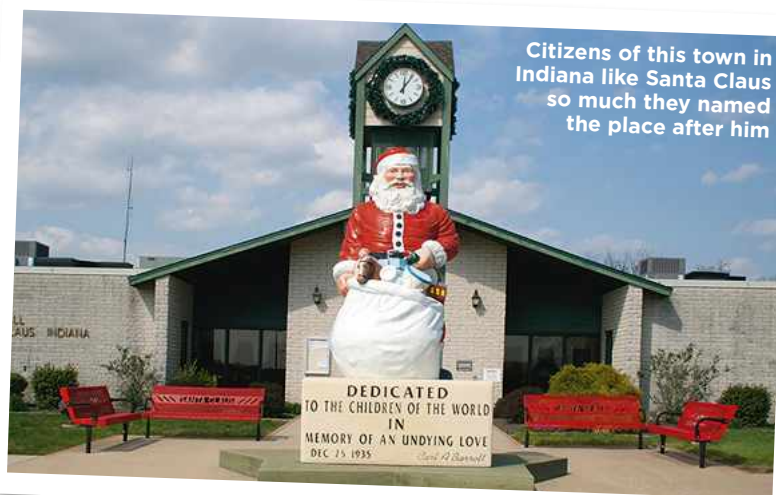


That this month's cover star – Arthur, King of the Britons – **may well have never existed** doesn't stop him being fascinating from a historical point of view. The question of who he may have been, where his legend came from and how it has been

manipulated down the centuries is an enduring one, the answer to which offers significant insight into **how our ancestors lived in the aftermath of the Roman occupation**. Renowned archaeologist Dr Miles Russell separates fact from myth on page 26.

Sticking with the giants of British history, few battles have the long-reaching effects of Trafalgar, and we examine **Nelson's final triumph** on page 72. As well as such big-hitters, we have some of the less-well-known stories from the past, such as the Berlin Blockade (p48), which was **the first major incident of the Cold War**, and Wilfred Thesiger's landmark crossing of the Arabian desert – the Empty Quarter (p78).

Elsewhere, **we're in festive mood**, and our Time Capsule (p8) and Q&A (p55) sections are packed with the history



of Christmas celebrations, as well as some of the more interesting events that have taken place at this time of year.

Visit our website, Facebook and Twitter pages for a **free daily helping of historic festive cheer!**

Finally, from all at **History Revealed**, we wish you a very merry Christmas and a peaceful 2015.

Paul

Paul McGuinness
Editor

Don't miss our January issue, on sale 8 January

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THIS MONTH WE'VE LEARNED...

30

Shots fired in as many seconds in the legendary 1881 gunfight at the OK Corral. See page 84.

381

The length in days of the Montgomery Bus Boycott, which launched Martin Luther King into the public eye. See page 62.

15

Number of women employed as food taster to Adolf Hitler at his Wolf's Lair HQ. See page 71.

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Egyptian mummifiers, whipping boys and food tasters – some of the worst jobs in history



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CHRISTMAS 2014

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CHRISTMAS SPECIAL

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READERS' LETTERS

Get in touch – share your opinions on history and our magazine

COLUMBUS'S CUES

The story of the Columbus expedition ('Who Discovered America?' December 2014) really begins in Alexandria during the third century BC, when the circumference of the Earth was estimated, giving a figure not far removed from modern estimates. During the Dark

to reach the Far East by sailing west, but his figure for the size of the Earth was clearly too small. For something like 13 years Columbus hawked this idea around the courts of Europe but the court geographers would have informed any interested sovereign that it was much

Nobody expected Columbus to return – but his voyage solved existing political problems

Ages, the Venerable Bede accepted both that the world was round and the figure estimated in Alexandria.

Finding a sea route to the Far East was worthwhile because the Turks were charging all the market could stand for spices carried on the overland route. The Portuguese seem to have been aware that the best route was round Africa, and eventually achieved this with the Vasco da Gama voyage.

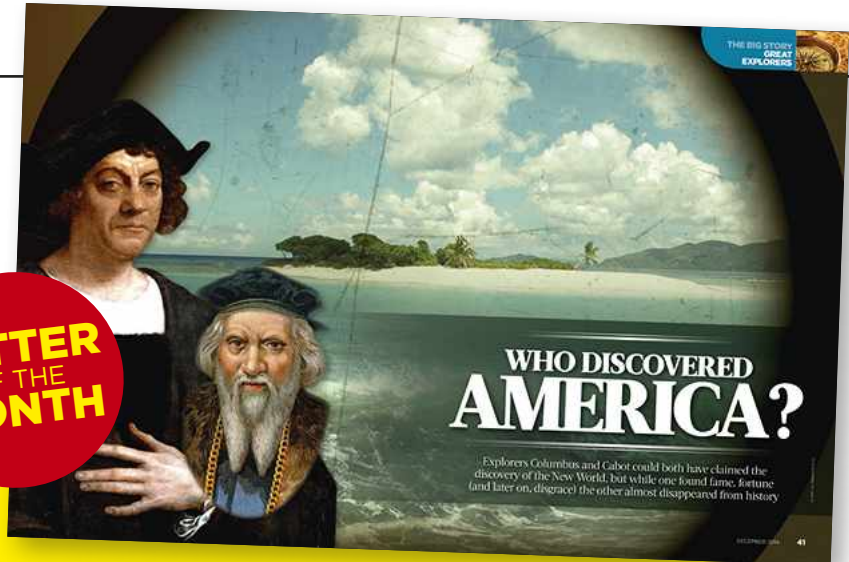
Columbus had correctly deduced that it was possible

further to the Far East than Columbus was suggesting.

Then, in 1492, Columbus had a stroke of luck. Ferdinand and Isabella, having just united Spain, had prisons full of former political opponents and criminals, and three old ships that, in modern terms, were ready for scrapping.

By giving Columbus the three old ships and the pick of the prisoners, the two new monarchs had solved a big problem. Columbus was given the title of acting admiral, which would be confirmed

LETTER
OF THE
MONTH



EASTERN PROMISE Columbus hoped to find a route to the Far East

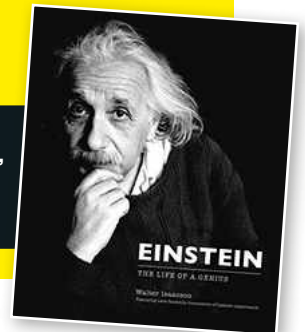
possibilities of what Columbus was suggesting, the real reasons were political expediency.

James Wells MRINA,
via email

Editor replies:

Thanks for your insightful comments. This just goes to show that the motivations behind many the great voyages of discovery make for stories as fascinating as the journeys themselves!

James Wells wins *Einstein: The Life of a Genius* by Walter Isaacson. Published by André Deutsch, worth £19.99. This richly illustrated hardback draws on new research and revealing personal documents to shed new light on the scientist.



ASSASSINATION ATTEMPT

The conspiracy to kill Hitler inspired the Tom Cruise hit *Valkyrie*

f I have just bought my first issue and really enjoyed reading it. I found it very interesting from front to back and really enjoyed the piece about the attempted assassination of Hitler. Will be subscribing to it very shortly.
Frank Cowburn

MOVING PICTURES

Despite the dubious accents in *Valkyrie* ('The Reel Story', December 2014), I thought it was an excellent movie. The story was something I had heard about, but in no great detail. This movie created an interest that made me look into it more.

It's movies like this and *Saving Private Ryan* that tell the youth of today what people went through, both Allied and Axis.

Ronnie Hancox,
via Facebook

EARLY EXPLORERS

When did Europeans reach America? I suspect that it was some time in the years BC. The Easter Island statues once had inlaid eyes. Inlaid eyes were a common feature of many of the oldest images of the Middle East, from Egypt to the Indus Valley. The seafaring Hittites, for


example, adopted the practice from the Sumerians. Many prehistoric American stone statues also had inlaid eyes.

How did they get to America? I suspect with raft boats. Thor Heyerdahl built two raft boats – *Ra I* and *Ra II* – in 1969 and 1970 to cross the Atlantic. His *Kon-Tiki* raft showed that it was also possible to cross the Pacific on a raft.

Geoff Bantock,
via email

Editor replies:

The lengths Thor Heyerdahl was prepared to go to in order to back up his theories are the stuff of legend. Look out for the next issue of *History Revealed*, which includes a look at his extraordinary adventures on his groundbreaking *Kon-Tiki* mission.

 Really loved the article on Queen Elizabeth I, especially the bit about her true appearance! @EmsVlismas


FINAL SAY

Re: famous last words (Top 10, December 2014), some of the most entertaining were those attributed to Oscar Wilde, usually quoted as: “Either this wallpaper goes or I do.” However, apparently this is not strictly correct – actually he was reported as saying: “This wallpaper and I are fighting a duel to the death. Either it

goes or I do.” Further evidence suggests that he said this some weeks before his death, so they were not his very last words.

Still, they are typical Oscar Wilde and make for a good story.

Barrie Vinten,
Rugby

 My @HistoryRevMag just arrived, never got up so fast on a Saturday lol! So glad I subscribed! @Rachel14322

PLOT SPOILER

I read with interest your gunpowder article (Q&A, July 2014). However, though Guy Fawkes is the most famous of the conspirators, it's puzzling why the actual leader – Robert Catesby – was naive enough to believe it would work. Did he learn nothing from the poorly planned Essex rebellion?

Putting 10-year-old Princess Elizabeth on the throne would have made her a puppet, not a monarch. He should have fled with the other supporters when the Monteagle letter gave them up. Too many people knew the details of the plot and 1,000 things went wrong before Catesby locked himself away in Holbeche House to die. Failure was written in the stars, but his friends died horribly because of his close-minded self-righteousness.

Matthew Wilson,
Wolverhampton


Editor replies:

It is difficult to understand why such a daring plot, which involved blowing the Houses of Parliament sky-high and kidnapping the king's daughter, was not abandoned once this infamous warning letter was delivered. However, it appears that Catesby was more concerned with the traitor in their midst, believing the letter to be too vague to pose any real threat to the Gunpowder Plot. The rest is, of course, history...

NEW PERSPECTIVES

As soon as *History Revealed* hits the doormat I go into a world of my own! Last night I couldn't put it down, it was so interesting. Seeing the Crusaders from the point of Saladin and the Ottoman Empire put a whole new angle on it for me.

Sheena Downey,
via email



 I thought it was an excellent read and have now passed my copy onto my friend Fay who, like me, loves visiting castles. Elaine Robinson

CROSSWORD N° 8 WINNERS

The lucky winners of the crossword from issue 8 are:
P Lentschner, Wiltshire
Nicola Fowler, Gwynedd
Marian Roberts, Greater Manchester
Well done! You have each won a copy of *In Search of Alfred the Great*, worth £20. To test your wits with this month's crossword, turn to page 96.

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HOW TO CONTACT US

 haveyoursay@historyrevealed.com
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 Or post:
Have Your Say, *History Revealed*,
Immediate Media, Tower House,
Fairfax Street, Bristol BS1 3BN



LAST GASPS

Even Lady Astor failed to match Oscar Wilde for deathbed wit

HISTORY REVEALED

Bringing the past to life

EDITORIAL

Editor Paul McGuinness
paul.mcguinness@historyrevealed.com
Production Editor Mel Woodward
mel.woodward@historyrevealed.com
Staff Writer Jonny Wilkes
jonny.wilkes@historyrevealed.com

ART

Art Editor Sheu-Kuei Ho
Picture Editor Rosie McPherson
Illustrators Dawn Cooper,
Jess Hibbert, Chris Stocker,
TIDY Designs

CONTRIBUTORS & EXPERTS

Paul Bloomfield, Emily Brand,
Dan Cossins, Julian Humphrys,
Greg Jenner, Pat Kinsella,
Sandra Lawrence, Rupert Matthews,
Jonathan Meakin, Gordon O'Sullivan,
Jim Parsons, Miles Russell,
Ellen Shiasko, Richard Smyth,
Nige Tassell

PRESS & PR

Press Officer
Carolyn Wray 0117 314 8812
carolyn.wray@immediate.co.uk

CIRCULATION

Circulation Manager Helen Seymour

ADVERTISING & MARKETING

Senior Advertisement Manager

Steve Grigg

steve.grigg@immediate.co.uk

Advertisement Manager

Lucy Moakes 0117 314 7426

lucy.moakes@immediate.co.uk

Deputy Advertisement Manager

Sam Jones 0117 314 8847

sam.jones@immediate.co.uk

Junior Brand Sales Executive

Jon Maney 0117 314 8754

jon.maney@immediate.co.uk

Subscriptions Director

Jacky Perales-Morris

Marketing Executive Gemma Burns

PRODUCTION

Production Director Sarah Powell

Production Co-ordinator

Emily Mounter

Ad Co-ordinator Jade O'Halloran

Ad Designer Rachel Shircore

Reprographics Tony Hunt,

Chris Sutcliffe

PUBLISHING

Publisher David Musgrove

Publishing Director Andy Healy

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Chairman Stephen Alexander

Deputy Chairman Peter Phippen

CEO Tom Bureau

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TIME CAPSULE

THIS MONTH IN HISTORY





SNAPSHOT

1932 HOLIDAY ON ICE

It looks like a bizarre punishment for some bad behaviour, but actually the children have been recruited for a race among the adults. It's all fun and games for the grown-ups as they race from one end of the ice to the other - while shoving their children with a broom.

The holidaymakers are spending their Christmas at the popular ski resort St Moritz, in Switzerland. With snow-capped mountains and frozen lakes, it is the perfect spot for a white Christmas.



SNAPSHOT

1962 POLAR EXPRESS

These starry decorations are shooting their way by rail to Birmingham to be hung along the city streets.

The festive cheer in 1962, however, was replaced by a literal cold shoulder by most people in Britain, starting on Boxing Day. Arctic weather set in, bringing with it snowdrifts and temperatures well below freezing, which would hold the country in an icy grip for more than two months. In Birmingham, mains water pipes froze, transport around the city crumbled and the ice made the ground so hard that gravediggers couldn't do their job.





LEVEL OFF LOADS
PROPERLY SECURE DOORS



SNAPSHOT

1955 FOR AULD LANG SYNE

It's New Year's Eve and tens of thousands of revellers have swarmed into London's Piccadilly Circus waiting for the countdown to 1956.

When the clock hits midnight, a common way to say goodbye was, and continues to be, to take the hands of the people around you and sing the Scots poem *Auld Lang Syne*. Written by Robert Burns in 1788, and put to the tune of a traditional folk song, singing *Auld Lang Syne* was a custom in Scotland to see out Hogmanay – or the last day of the year – but the tradition quickly spread around the world. The poem is a call to remember old friendships, and what better time to do so than at the close of the year?





"I READ THE NEWS TODAY..."

The weird and wonderful of **Christmas** time!



The 'snow' in the movie was made of foamite, water, sugar and soap – replacing the often-used crushed cornflakes.

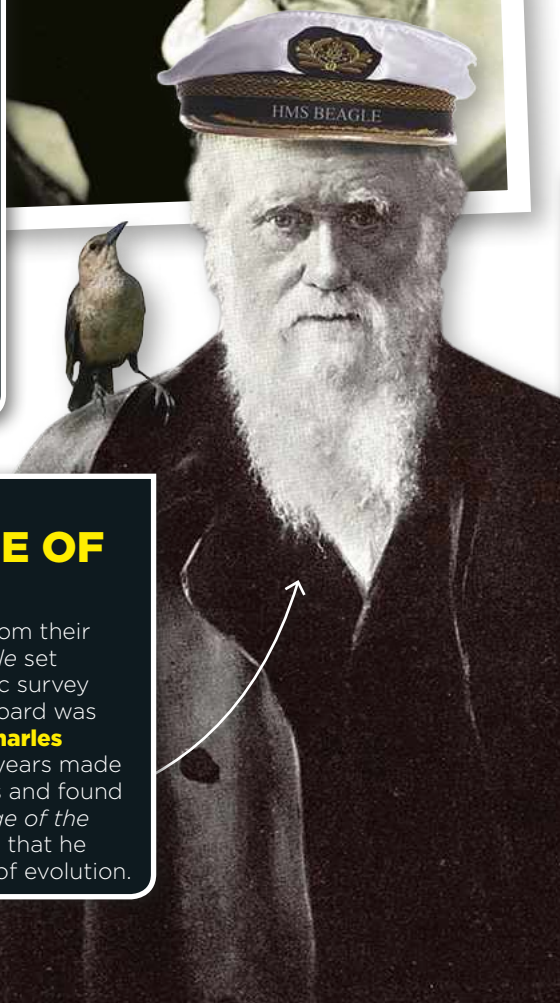
MAKING LIFE WONDERFUL 1946 THE ULTIMATE CHRISTMAS MOVIE

When Harry Bailey raises a glass and utters the words: "A toast to my big brother George. **The richest man in town**", there is rarely a dry eye.

Since its release in December 1946, the **perennial Christmas favourite**, *It's a Wonderful Life*, has enchanted audiences. Set in the idyllic Bedford Falls, the film tells the story of George Bailey, a dreamer who feels trapped in his mundane existence, until he is visited by his guardian angel Clarence. James Stewart gives the performance of his career as the troubled soul George – but the actor originally **turned down the role** as he had only recently returned from military service in World War II. He was convinced to take the role of a lifetime by Lionel Barrymore (the movie's greedy, detested villain Mr Potter).

EVERY DOG HAS ITS DAY 1831 THE VOYAGE OF THE BEAGLE

Once the crew had recovered from their Christmas merriness, HMS *Beagle* set sail from Plymouth on its historic survey expedition on 27 December. Aboard was the **young trainee naturalist, Charles Darwin**, who over the next five years made monumental geological findings and found fame with his journal, *The Voyage of the Beagle*. It was on the expedition that he formed the basis for his theory of evolution.



THE FIRST NATIVITY 1223 BABE OF BETHLEHEM

Every Christmas, children dress up as shepherds, kings or donkeys to recreate the nativity, a tradition going back nearly 800 years. In a cave near the Italian village of Greccio, **Saint Francis of Assisi** staged a living scene with real animals and people as the Biblical characters. As people flocked to see his creation, Francis preached of the birth of the 'babe of Bethlehem' – he was **so overwhelmed** by the story, he couldn't say 'Jesus'.



HEAVENLY PIECE 1818 A CAROL IS BORN

With only a **few hours** before his Christmas Eve midnight mass, Austrian priest Joseph Mohr asked his friend, and church organist, Franz Xaver Gruber to compose a carol for the service. Gruber, a schoolteacher, composed the beloved **Stille Nacht** – or *Silent Night* – in super quick time, using Mohr's poem for the lyrics. The carol was performed later that night.






THE MEANING OF CHRISTMAS

Francis of Assisi felt compelled to build his nativity scene to remind people that Christmas was a time for worship, not gift giving.

HALLEY'S PERFECT PREDICTION

1758 CHRISTMAS DAY COMET

In 1682, English astronomer Edmond Halley's observation of a comet set off decades of research, leading to a ground-breaking conclusion. The comets of 1531, 1607 and 1682 – and also spotted on the Bayeux Tapestry – were the same celestial body. Halley predicted the comet would return in 1758 and, even though he didn't live that long, it appeared on schedule. The comet was named after Halley, the man who knew it was on the way.



“...OH BOY”

The major events of 25 DECEMBER

AD 336

ROMAN HOLIDAY

The earliest record of a celebration of the birth of Jesus Christ.

AD 800

CONGRATS CHARLEMAGNE

Charlemagne, King of the Franks, was crowned 'Emperor of the Romans' at a Mass given by the Pope.

1085

DOMESDAY BOOK

William the Conqueror ordered a complete survey of English estates.

1492

DEATH OF SANTA

Christopher Columbus's ship *Santa Maria* sank near Haiti after the crew got drunk and fell asleep.

1642

NEW NEWTON

One of history's most influential scientists and mathematicians, Isaac Newton, was born.

1926

EMPIRE OF THE SUN

Hirohito was made the 124th Emperor of Japan – he goes on to become the country's longest-reigning monarch.

1977


THE REST IS SILENCE

Silent movie star and comedian Charlie Chaplin dies, aged 88.

HO HO HOMER

1989 MEETING THE SIMPSONS


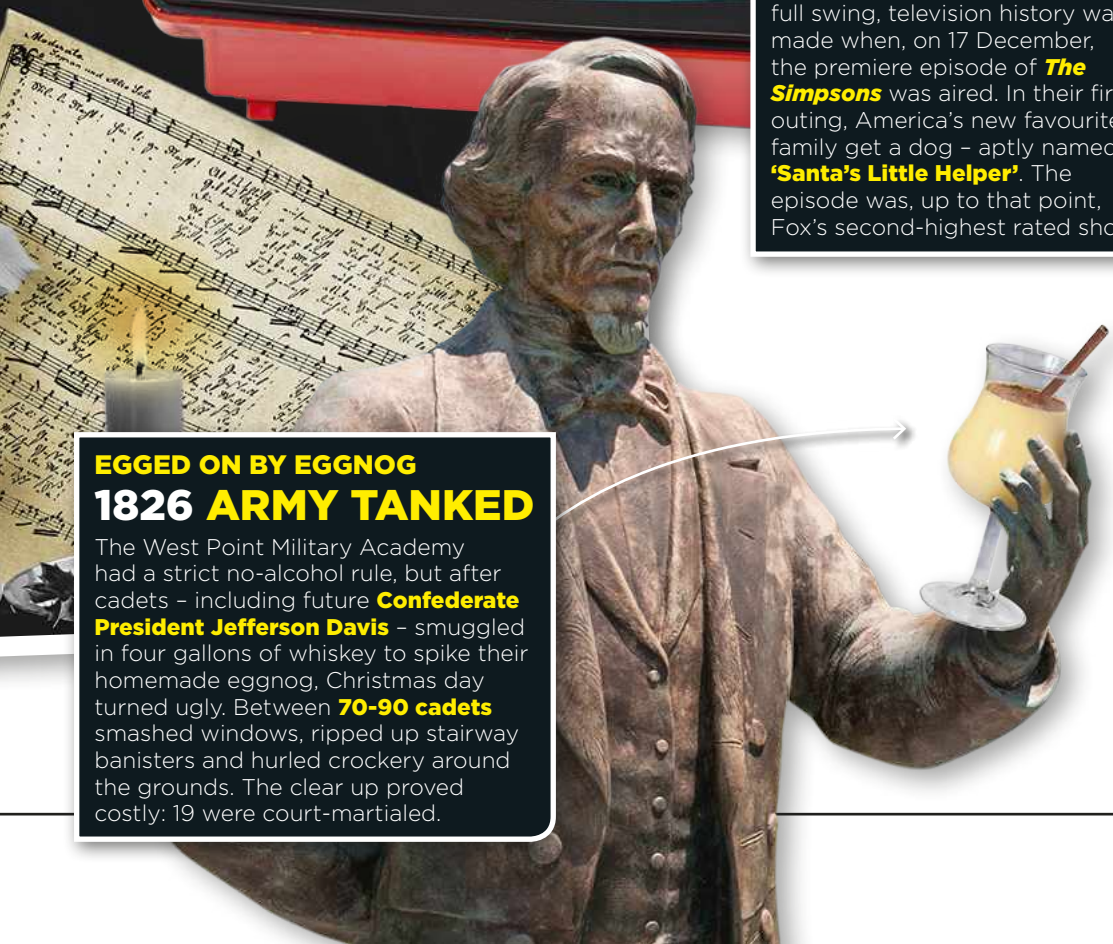
With the 1989 festive season in full swing, television history was made when, on 17 December, the premiere episode of *The Simpsons* was aired. In their first outing, America's new favourite family get a dog – aptly named 'Santa's Little Helper'. The episode was, up to that point, Fox's second-highest rated show.



EGGED ON BY EGGNOG

1826 ARMY TANKED

The West Point Military Academy had a strict no-alcohol rule, but after cadets – including future **Confederate President Jefferson Davis** – smuggled in four gallons of whiskey to spike their homemade eggnog, Christmas day turned ugly. Between **70-90 cadets** smashed windows, ripped up stairway banisters and hurled crockery around the grounds. The clear up proved costly: 19 were court-martialed.



AND FINALLY...

On 24 December 1865, six veterans of the American Civil War formed a **secret society** hellbent on reversing the government's progressive laws towards African-Americans. The society's name: **Ku Klux Klan**.

WHAT HAPPENED NEXT?

The battle that swung the balance of the American Revolutionary War

1776 WASHINGTON LAUNCHES A SURPRISE BOXING DAY ATTACK

The demoralised Continental Army was in retreat when Commander-in-Chief George Washington devised a daring assault...

The future looked bleak for George Washington and his Continental Army as 1776 came to a close. British forces had pushed Washington out of New York, across the Delaware River and into Pennsylvania.

There they camped, exhausted, disheartened and waiting for the crushing blow to the American Revolutionary War. The reason that blow didn't come was British General William Howe's decision to order his troops into winter quarters, leaving Washington's army in disarray with soldiers deserting or reaching the end of their enlistment. Time was running out for Washington to clinch a much-needed victory.

RIVER CROSSING

Washington's sights were to the small town of Trenton across the Delaware, where three regiments of Hessians – German mercenaries fighting for the British – were based under Colonel Johann Rall. The plan was to cross the freezing river with 2,400 soldiers, along with horses and 18 cannons, on the night of 25 December and attack at dawn. It was hoped by some of Washington's officers that the Hessians would be drunk from their Christmas celebrations.

Crossing the Delaware was a logistical nightmare but everyone got safely across with their supplies and began the nine-mile march to Trenton. Many soldiers marched without footwear, so the road became coloured by the blood of their injured feet.

AMERICAN DREAM

Despite the Hessians not being drunk, they were caught completely by surprise. Rall, who was fatally wounded in the fighting, was warned of the attack at dinner the night before, but chose to ignore it. The assault was a comprehensive victory – in just over an hour, the Americans had driven the Hessians through the narrow streets of Trenton into a small orchard and forced their surrender. Only a handful of Americans died while 22 Hessians were killed, and 1,000 captured.

The victory was not actually strategically very important, but there is no underestimating how effective it was in boosting morale and restoring faith. News of Washington's crossing of the Delaware spread, and he followed it up with further victories at Princeton in January. Americans began to believe once again that they could throw off the tyranny of British rule. ☉

NATIONAL ICON

This painting by German-American artist Emanuel Gottlieb Leutze was completed in 1851. It is a **highly romanticised** and historically flawed portrayal of the crossing, but is now a symbol of **patriotism**.



“These are the times that try men’s souls”

from *The American Crisis* by Thomas Paine, published December 1776

FOUNDING FATHER

George Washington was an **instrumental leader** throughout the war. Much respected by the other Founding Fathers, he was chosen to preside over the convention that drafted the Constitution, and was elected as the nation’s **first-ever President**.

FLYING A FAKE FLAG

Arguably the painting’s most blatant anachronism is the flag, held by **future President James Monroe**. The ‘Stars and Stripes’ design did not exist in 1776 – it was first unfurled in September 1777. Instead of the stars, the American national flag had the **British Union Flag** in the corner.

TREACHEROUS CROSSING

The crossing took place in pitch black amidst a storm of **snow, sleet and torrential rain**. The river was freezing over so boats had to navigate through solidifying patches of ice. The **Durham boats** actually used had much higher sides than the one depicted in the painting.

AMERICA IN A BOAT

Whereas those who crossed the Delaware wore whatever they could, Leutze dressed the men in his painting so that they **represented American society**. There is a frontiersman at the front of the boat, a black rower, a Native American wearing green and what appears to be a **woman in a red shirt**.

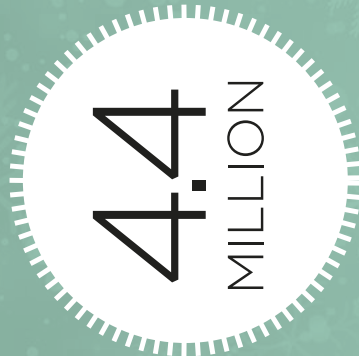


GRAPHIC HISTORY

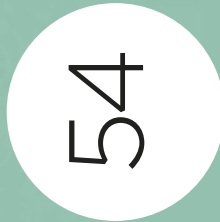
A visual guide to the past

1800 OH! CHRISTMAS TREE

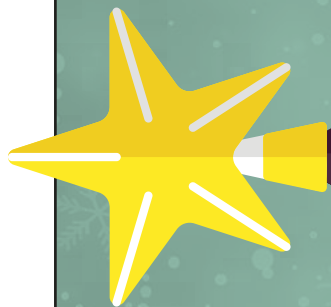
In December 1800, Queen Charlotte introduced a tradition to Britain from her German homeland. Soon enough, every house had its own bedecked arboreal delight come Christmastime...



The number of Christmas trees grown in the UK every year (Germany grows 19 million)

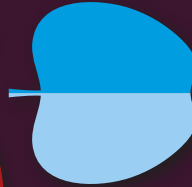


According to First Lady Michelle Obama, this was the number of Christmas trees erected in the White House in 2012



Pre-1500:

Before Christmas trees, there were Paradise trees. These were props from a seasonal piece of entertainment: the Paradise play. Performed on 24 December, this Pagan play included a fir tree decorated with wafers, biscuits and apples.



1536

The Christmas tree may have originated with Martin Luther. Reportedly, he was inspired by stars twinkling through trees at night, and put candles on a tree in his home to remind us of God's starry heaven.



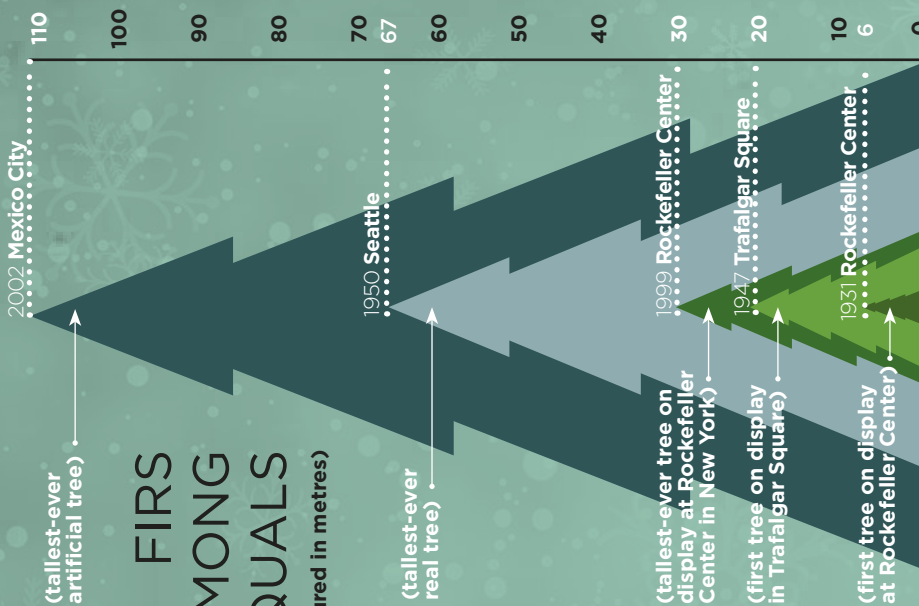
1605

By now, decorated Christmas trees had been adopted by the Lutheran population of Germany. As well as apples – a hangover from the Paradise tree – colourful paper roses, gold foil and sweets began to grace the branches.



FIRS AMONG EQUALS

(measured in metres)



The value in dollars of blown-glass tree ornaments sold by just one US distributor in 1890



8
MILLION

The number of real trees sold every year in the UK



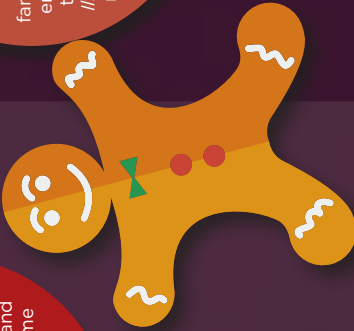
1982
During the pontificate of Pope John Paul II, the first Christmas tree was erected in Saint Peter's Square in Vatican City.



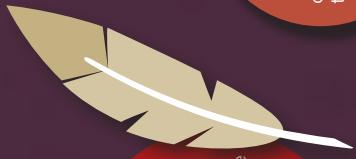
1882
The first use of electric lights instead of candles came in 1882, as part of a publicity stunt by the Edison Electric Light Company in New York.



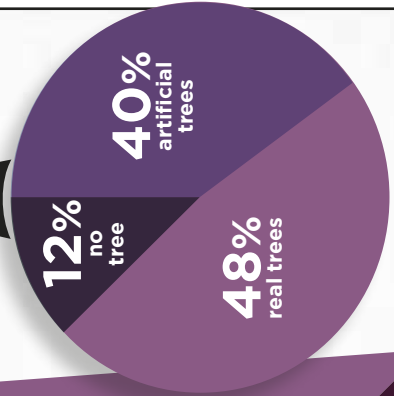
1947
The first Trafalgar Square tree was erected. The annual tradition is a gift to the UK by Norway, in gratitude for Britain's support during World War II.



1930s
The cost of electric light bulbs came down, meaning that fairy lights finally became popular during this decade.



Late 1800s
The first artificial Christmas trees were developed around this time in Germany. The earliest ones were made from a wire frame, with dyed-green feathers laid over the top.



TO TREE
OR NOT
TO TREE
How UK households currently uphold the tradition



ALL PRESENT AND CORRECT

In the late 18th century, the Romantic poet Samuel Taylor Coleridge visited Germany at Christmastime and witnessed the Christmas tree ritual, which, by now, included the placing of gifts beneath the tree. At this stage, though, the tree was still quite small: it was often simply a yew bough rather than a full fir tree.



Friday, January 8, 1915.

The Daily Mirror

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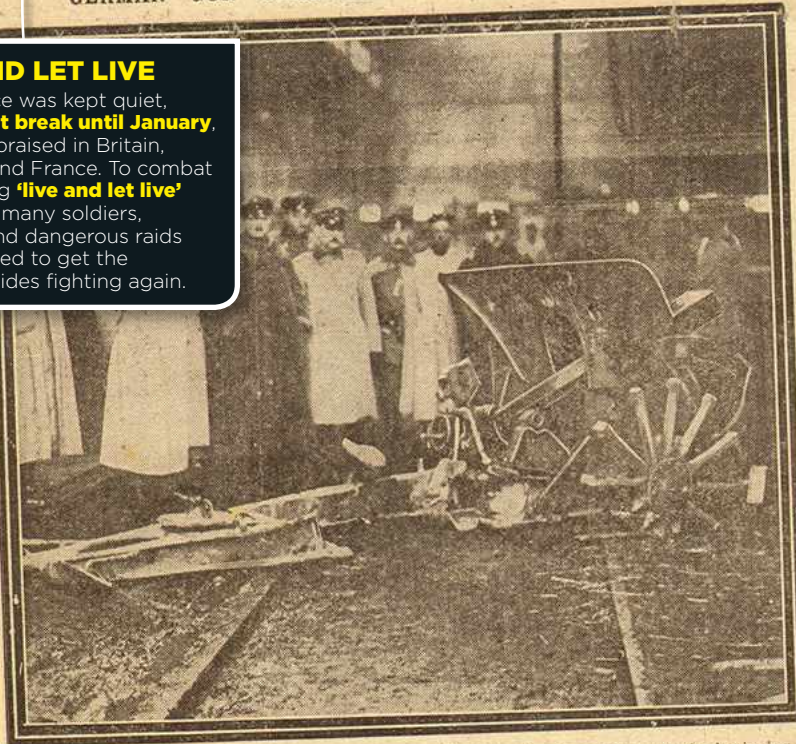
AN HISTORIC GROUP: BRITISH AND GERMAN SOLDIERS PHOTOGRAPHED TOGETHER.



Foes became friends on Christmas Day, when the British and Germans arranged an unofficial truce. The men left the trenches to exchange cigars and cigarettes, and

were even photographed together. This is the historic picture, and shows the soldiers of the opposing Armies standing side by side.

GERMAN GUN SHATTERED BY BRITISH SHELLS.



German gun, smashed by two British shells, taken behind the firing line for repairs. - At the beginning of the war the enemy's artillery could claim a superiority, but now the position has been reversed. Both British and French guns are doing great execution.

DOG SAVES SAILOR'S LIFE.



A.B. John Cowan, a Formidable survivor, with Lassie, who saved his life at Lyme Regis. The dog licked his face assiduously, thus inducing circulation.—(Daily Mirror photograph.)

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Printed and Published by THE PICTORIAL-NEWSPAPER Co. (1910), Ltd., at The Daily Mirror Offices, 23-29, Boulevard-street, London, E.C.—Friday, January 8, 1915.

LIVE AND LET LIVE

As the truce was kept quiet, news didn't break until January, but it was praised in Britain, Germany and France. To combat the growing 'live and let live' attitude of many soldiers, frequent and dangerous raids were planned to get the opposing sides fighting again.

YESTERDAY'S PAPERS

It wasn't until **8 January 1915** that news of the Christmas truce hit the papers

"ONE OF THE GREATEST SURPRISES OF A SURPRISING WAR"

TOMMY AND JERRY

The Christmas truce was not sanctioned by the leadership, but was rather a spontaneous **surge of peace** that came from the soldiers on the front line. Attempts had been made, including by **the Pope**, for an official Christmas ceasefire but they had all failed.

Christmas 1914, and it was already evident that World War I was a conflict the likes of which had never been seen before. The oft-quoted "It will all be over by Christmas" was dismissed as arrogant folly, but, for a brief spell, the war was over *for* Christmas.

Confined to their trenches, soldiers showed signs of fraternisation before Christmas, from greetings to short-term ceasefires so the dead could be retrieved from 'no man's land'. Then late on Christmas Eve, the Germans decorated their trenches with small fir trees adorned with candles, and erupted into carol singing. The British returned with songs of their own until *O Come All Ye Faithful* began and voices were heard from both sides of the battlefield.

The next day, both British 'Tommies' and the Germans – or 'Jerry' – clambered out of their trenches to meet their enemy. Jokes were shared, gifts of food, cigarettes and buttons were exchanged, and impromptu football matches broke out, some of which used ration tins as balls. The unofficial peace wasn't observed everywhere – some parts of the Western Front saw fighting and shelling throughout 25 December – and military authorities wanted to hush up the truce as they feared it undermined the image of the enemy as monstrous or inhuman. But for a short while, humanity won out against horror and violence. A British soldier later recollected: "I wouldn't have missed that unique and weird Christmas Day for anything". ☺



FRIEND OR FOE

ABOVE: On Christmas Day, an English soldier meets with a couple of German troops
RIGHT: The cover of *The Illustrated London News* depicts the truce



1914 ALSO IN THE NEWS...

12 DECEMBER The New York Stock Exchange opens for its **first day of trading** since the start of World War I – it is hoped money can go to the war effort, but **stocks plummet** to an all-time low.

18 DECEMBER As they are at war with the Ottoman Empire (modern-day Turkey), the British formally **declare a Protectorate over Egypt** and install a new Sultan into power, causing widespread discontent.

21 DECEMBER The silent movie *Tillie's Punctured Romance*, starring Charlie Chaplin and the Keystone Kops, becomes the world's first **feature-length comedy** when it is released in cinemas.



THE EXTRAORDINARY TALE OF...

When four students stole the **Stone of Scone**

1950 FOUR SCOTTISH NATIONALISTS STEAL A HISTORIC TREASURE

On 25 December 1950, a break-in at Westminster Abbey leads to a four-month hunt for an ancient artefact...

Before the Sun was up on Christmas Day 1950, a bold, if outlandish, theft was underway, starting at the side door of Westminster Abbey. After a long and tiring drive from Glasgow to London, four Scottish students were jimmying open the door to the hallowed abbey with a crowbar, intent on filching a priceless piece of their nation's heritage: the Stone of Scone.

In the post-World War II years, the call for independence in Scotland had been noticeably quiet as Britain was more than usually united by its shared experiences from six years of war. Nationalist support was low, but, in these four young opportunistic thieves, the Scottish independence movement was about to have new champions.

ROCKY HISTORY

The Stone of Scone – or the Stone of Destiny – is not exactly impressive to look at. Nothing more than a 150kg block of red sandstone, measuring 66cm long,

with a roughly carved cross on one side, it's hardly the Crown Jewels, but the stone holds a special place in history to the Scots as it was used for centuries in the coronation services of Scottish monarchs. Why the stone became so symbolically important is a mystery, but one legend claims it was used by the Biblical figure Jacob as a pillow.

John de Balliol, in 1292, was the final Scottish king crowned using the stone, four years before Edward I of England (appropriately named the 'Hammer of the Scots') captured it as a spoil of war. Taken from its historic resting place in Scone Abbey, near the Scottish city of Perth, the stone was sent to Westminster Abbey in London and fitted into a chair – the Coronation Chair – on which English kings and queens were crowned for the next 650 years.

AMATEUR THIEVES

Pinching the stone was not the scheme of a criminal mastermind.

“In removing the Stone of Destiny, they were restoring to the people of Scotland the most ancient and most honourable part of the Scottish regalia”

from an unsigned letter addressed to the King, left with the Stone of Scone when it was brought to Arbroath Abbey, April 1951

LIFE AFTER CRIME

Ian Hamilton went on to become a lawyer. On being admitted to the bar in 1953, he **refused to swear allegiance to Elizabeth II**, arguing that she should just be Queen Elizabeth. He didn't recognise the number as Elizabeth I hadn't ruled over Scotland.



NATIONAL HERO

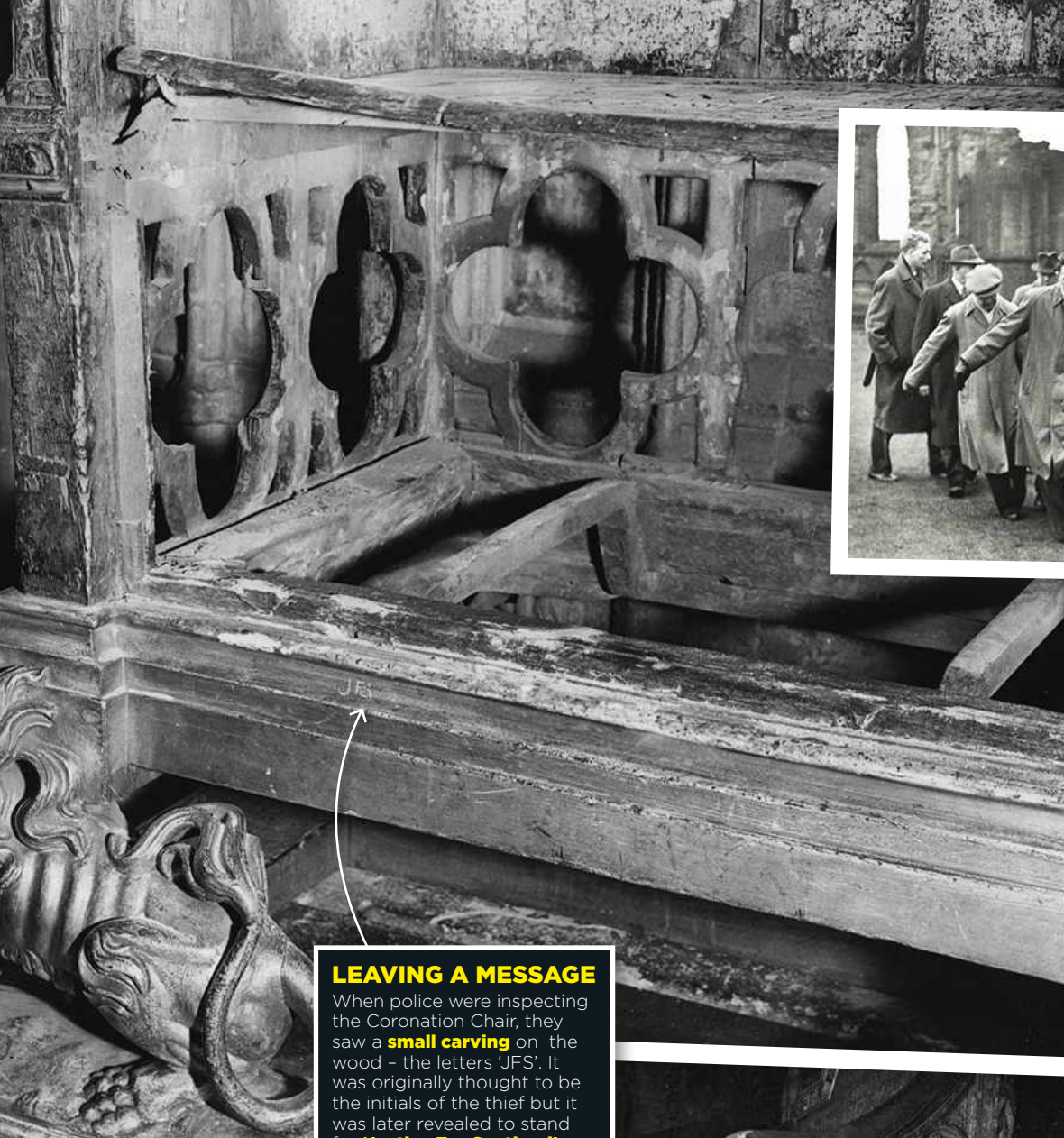
Ian Hamilton was questioned about the theft but was not arrested

Ian Hamilton was studying law at the University of Glasgow in 1950 when he, and three of his fellow students, decided to give it a go, more as a student prank than out of nationalist zeal.

In planning the theft, Ian travelled to Westminster Abbey to scout out the best entrance. A security guard spotted him but, believing he was a vagrant, handed him half a crown. They put their scheme into action in the days leading to Christmas. Ian, Kay Matheson, Gavin Vernon and Alan Stuart made the drive to London, taking around 20 hours,

arriving late on 24 December. It was still dark in the early hours of Christmas Day when three of them broke into the abbey and prised the stone from the Coronation Chair, while Kay waited in the car. But as they carried the stone out of the abbey, they lost their grips on the heavy block. It fell onto the hard ground and cracked in two.

The smaller piece was hauled into the boot of the waiting car but before they could get the larger piece out, a policeman showed up. The quick-thinking Ian jumped into the passenger seat and started kissing Kay,



LEAVING A MESSAGE

When police were inspecting the Coronation Chair, they saw a **small carving** on the wood – the letters 'JFS'. It was originally thought to be the initials of the thief but it was later revealed to stand for **'Justice For Scotland'**.

in the hope of convincing the copper they were a couple just looking for a quiet spot. Once the policeman let them go, the rest of the stone was loaded and driven out of London. The jubilant thieves met up with a fifth conspirator, John Josselyn, who, despite being born in England, was a Scottish nationalist. With his help, the getaway made slow progress back to Scotland. A mass police hunt was launched, including patrols of the borders, but Ian and co managed to sneak back into Scotland. There, they toasted the stone's homecoming by pouring whisky over it.

RUINED HOPES

That was as far as plans went. For over three months, the search continued in vain while those possessing it thought of what to do. In April 1951, the stone



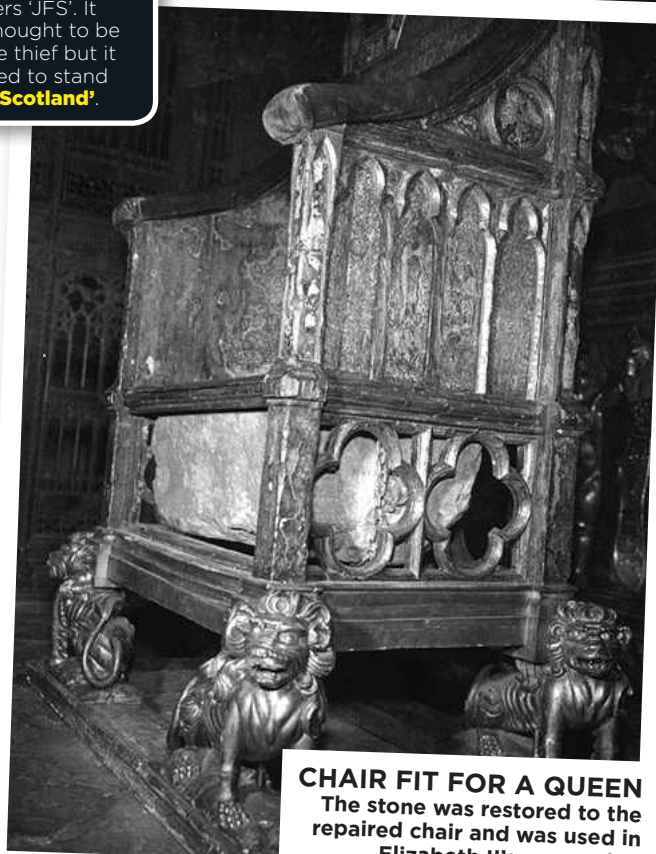
ABOVE: **Police remove the Stone of Scone from Arbroath Abbey on 11 April 1951**
LEFT: **The Coronation Chair was partially damaged when the stone was lifted out**

appeared at Arbroath Abbey, draped in the St Andrew's flag of Scotland and laid on the altar.

There was a letter, addressed to King George VI, left with the stone, justifying the motives of the thieves. It read: "They have been inspired in all they have done by their deep love of his Majesty's realm of Scotland and by their desire to compel the attention of his Majesty's Minister to the widely expressed demand of Scottish people for a measure of self-government." Police were immediately informed of the stone's whereabouts and, four months after being stolen, it was returned to Westminster Abbey.

The four perpetrators faced questioning by police but escaped prosecution. The police, and British government, wanted to stop the story from growing, so the thieves received a slap on the wrists and were sent on their way.

The theft renewed the stone's importance to the Scottish, and its turbulent history again became a symbolic touchstone for the country. In 1996, following vigorous campaigning, the stone was finally returned to Scotland, to be kept at Edinburgh Castle. 📍



CHAIR FIT FOR A QUEEN

The stone was restored to the repaired chair and was used in Elizabeth II's coronation

📍 WHAT DO YOU THINK?

Should the stealing of the Stone of Scone be celebrated or condemned?

Email: editor@historyrevealed.com

HISTORY

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HISTORY
REVEALED



THE SEARCH FOR KING ARTHUR

AND THE STORY OF BRITAIN IN THE DARK AGES

The country is divided. It's the fifth century AD, and the Roman Empire has withdrawn from the British Isles. The remaining Romano Britons – without an organised army or any central authority – are being forced into ever-diminishing areas by invaders from all around.

These raiders are brutish and uncivilised, especially in comparison to the cultured Romans who flourished here only a generation ago. But they aren't the only villains to worry about. Tyrannical rulers are springing up all over the place, including inside the Romano Briton camp. The people need a hero – in hindsight he will be remembered as King Arthur, but how much truth is there to the myth? And how did the British Isles end up in this dire situation? **Dr Miles Russell** takes us back to Dark Ages Britain – when the land was in turmoil – to find the answers.

NOW READ ON...

NEED TO KNOW

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TIMELINE

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KING ARTHUR

The Dark Age superhero p42

GET HOOKED

Continue your Dark Age journey p47



HOLY HIDEAWAY
Which sixth-century
saint sought refuge in
these Welsh cliffs?
See page 36



WHAT A LEGEND

According to myth, Dark Ages Britain was a land of dragons, wizards, magical swords and, of course, King Arthur



THE BIG STORY KING ARTHUR & THE DARK AGES

BROTHERS FROM AFAR

According to folklore, Saracen brothers Esclabor and Arphasar (kneeling) travelled from the Middle East to join King Arthur's cause.



MAN OF MYTH

In the aftermath of Roman rule, a heroic figure was born: King Arthur (in the blue), seen here in a 14th-century illustration

1

ROME, OUT

The Romans changed Britain in many ways, but arguably no more so than when they left

Before the Romans arrived in Britain, the island was littered with a patchwork of tribes and clans. Between AD 43 and AD 90, the Roman state attempted to subjugate and assimilate these tribes into its Empire, but by the early AD 120s, it was becoming clear that only the southern lowlands could successfully be controlled, and Emperor Hadrian created a frontier line running from what is now Newcastle to Carlisle. Although 'Britannia', to the south of Hadrian's Wall, was provided with towns and an effective road communication network,

the province never took hold as completely as Rome would have liked. The population clung to many native traits, with only the wealthy elite becoming fully 'Roman' in their outlook and culture.

367

The length in years of Roman rule in Britain

In AD 409, after many years of revolt and barbarian incursion, the authorities in Britain rebelled against their masters in Rome, and set about organising their own government. It was a politically seismic event, Britain having been part of the Roman Empire for nearly four centuries. The years that followed saw the fragmentation of the province, the arrival of large numbers of migrants (the



THEY CAME, THEY SAW, THEY LEFT
Romans sail away from British shores, leaving havoc in their wake

ancestors of both the Scots and English), the rise of violent warlords, and a protracted war that would eventually tear Britain apart. This is

arguably the most important period in British history, laying the foundations of the modern states of the United Kingdom, and yet very little is really known about the events and people that shaped it.

Traditionally referred to as the 'Dark Ages', due to the perceived lack of written sources, the immediate post-Roman period is a time of chronological uncertainty, shrouded in the fog of myth and legend. While historians and archaeologists debate the nature of burial and settlement, culture and economy, the popular view of the period is fuelled by epic mythology – a fantasy world of warriors, sorcery, dragons and giant-killers. Folk tales and legends coalesce around key mythical figures such as Merlin, Morgana, Coel, Mordred and, the most famous of all, King Arthur.

PETTY RULERS

In reality, it would appear that, in the political deficit that followed the break with Rome, a series of fledgling kingdoms began to emerge from the former towns of the Roman province, each with its own leader and protective group of warrior forces. Some of these petty kings and queens may have operated like later Mafia dons, their foot soldiers extorting money with menaces via tightly controlled 'protection' rackets. Others may have acted more like feudal lords and ladies, at the top of a well-developed social pyramid comprising a political and religious elite, merchants, dependants and tenant farmers. However they evolved, these increasingly fractured states were threatened by the sudden arrival of invaders, eager to find land of their own.

In the early years of the fifth century, southern Britain was at the mercy of three major social migrations: the English (Angles, Saxons and Jutes) from beyond the North Sea, the Scots and Attacotti from Ireland, and the Picts (Caledones and Maetae) from the lands to the north of Hadrian's Wall. To protect themselves from what was perceived to be the greater threat – the Picts of northern Britain – southern leaders needed greater access to some form of military support. With

no permanent state-sponsored army, now that Rome was in full retreat, many leaders sought aid from the Germanic Saxons, large numbers of whom were invited to settle in Kent from the second decade of the fifth century.

This, then, is where our story starts...



MELTING POT DIVERSE LAND

After the removal of central government in AD 409, Britain's inhabitants saw turbulent times. New migrant groups, namely the Saxons, Angles, Jutes, Caledones, Maetae, Scots and Attacotti, arrived, and the political unrest tore at the fault lines in society, not just between the various clans and tribes, but also between religious groups and the wealthy and poorer classes. Rich country estates were deserted, while strong-points in the landscape – such as prehistoric hillforts – were refortified.

Roman towns became political centres for a new warrior elite. Some of these elites joined forces to fight the migrant groups; sometimes they invited them in to serve as mercenaries. A few of the petty rulers of Britain lived in peace with one another; more frequently they engaged in competition, sometimes spilling out into open war. This is not, therefore, a clear-cut picture of 'Briton' against 'Saxon', but an ever-deteriorating period of civil conflict in which ethnic origin, culture or tribal affiliation increasingly had little meaning.



PLACE INVADERS
Saxons, Jutes and Angles, armed to the hilt, cross the sea to the newly defenceless Britain

“THIS IS THE MOST IMPORTANT PERIOD IN BRITISH HISTORY, LAYING THE FOUNDATIONS OF THE MODERN UNITED KINGDOM, YET LITTLE IS KNOWN ABOUT IT.”

FROM ORDER TO CHAOS COLLAPSE AND CONQUER

The effect that the fifth-century collapse of authority would have had on the population of Roman Britain can only be surmised. Within the space of a generation, the political and military system that had held the province together, providing four centuries of stability, had disappeared. It is likely that this was a time of great fear for the average individual, as the positions of authority were slowly taken up by power-hungry tyrants.

Throughout history, when the infrastructure of government collapses at a national level, the

results have often been terrifying. Suddenly, politicians, generals and criminals – previously constrained by a functioning justice system – are set free to act as they see fit. In recent years, the disintegration of power in Chechnya, Somalia, Afghanistan and Syria has resulted in the rise of militants, each with their own territory and agenda. Warlords in the ruins of Roman Britain were no doubt very similar, each with their own land and support structure, forming alliances or fighting neighbours as and when the situation demanded action.



INTERNATIONAL TRADE CENTRE

The different tribes and cultures of Britain established their own trade networks

For many thousands of years, the English Channel represented a vital link to the continental landmass of Europe. In the days before an organised road, canal, rail or air network, the best way to move goods from A to B was by water, along the rivers, across the tidal estuaries and over the open sea. In the pre-Roman Iron Age, those communities living on the coast probably had more in common with those living on the opposite side of the Channel than with those living inland.

The Channel continued to be an important trade link. It is in areas situated close to the sea that we find our best evidence for the importation of goods from the Roman Empire, especially wine, olive oil and decorative metalwork. Britain was to become an important part of Rome's economy, with

lead, iron, tin, bronze and gold being exported in large quantities, while beef and grain were also exported to feed Rome's large urban and military population.

The decline and gradual disappearance of Roman life can be detected at all levels of society in Britain from the third century AD. Fewer Mediterranean trade items entered Britain from this time, external trade links having been more firmly established between Britain and her immediate neighbours in Europe. Internally, both manufacturing and trade seem to be in a steep decline across Britain after AD 409, as there is little evidence of goods being moved around the island.

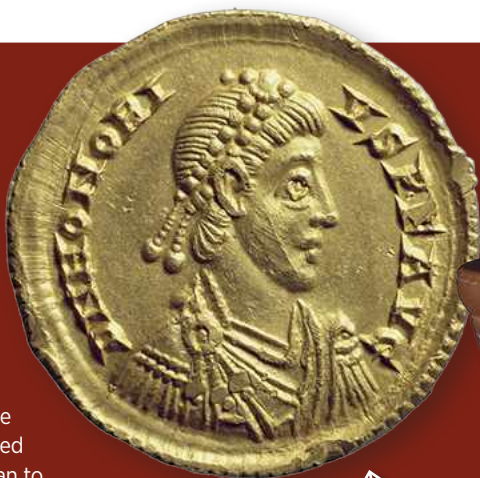
The communication networks had deteriorated, while the large-scale industries of the Roman period, such as pottery and glass manufacture, came to an end. Where goods production and manufacture did continue, it is on a smaller and much more locally-based scale.

3
The number of ships that, according to legend, brought Saxon followers of leaders Hengist and Horsa to Britain

"COMMUNICATION NETWORKS DETERIORATED, WHILE INDUSTRIES CAME TO AN END"

WELL MINTED THE CURRENCY QUESTION

One very noticeable thing about the end of Roman Britain is the disappearance of coinage. Previously, coins had been minted by the state in order to pay soldiers and officials, as well as allowing the people to pay their taxes in a form that was more manageable than grain or cows. The absence of both an official military and state-funded administration meant that people once again began to buy and sell goods through barter and exchange, rather than using pieces of precious metal stamped with the likeness of the Emperor.



HIS HONORIUS
Honorius was the last Emperor from Rome to appear on British coins. This gold token dates from c400 AD.

EAST V WEST THE GREAT DIVIDE IN ISLAND TRADE

From the late-third century AD, those communities in the eastern half of Britain were trading more enthusiastically with their neighbours in north-western Europe. Successive movements of economic migrations from the Germanic world increased the number of Saxon and Teutonic artefacts, fashions and ultimately people within eastern Britain.

In the west, however, it was a different story. Trade connections between the tin-producing areas of the South West and the Roman world, which was forever hungry for raw materials, continued, albeit on a smaller scale than during the heyday of the Empire. Evidence for wine amphorae, together with more exotic foodstuffs such as dates and figs, has been found in the fifth- and sixth-century coastal settlements of Cornwall and Devon, suggesting that low-level trade continued for quite some time after official ties between Britain and the Mediterranean were severed. Across what is now Wales and western England, population movement coupled with trade and other interactions, were strongest with non-Roman Ireland. This increased the number of explicitly Celtic art forms and artefacts in circulation in the region. Over time, the differences between eastern and western Britain accelerated, creating cultural and linguistic distinctions that we still see today.

THE BRITONS

The Romano Britons continued to trade with Rome, bringing classic Mediterranean items into the country, particularly in the South West.



SAMIAN WARE BOWL
Many distinctly non-British items entered Britain in the early post-Roman period. This red slip Samian pottery bowl is one such example.



CELT'S PICTS

HADRIAN'S WALL

ANGLES

BRITONS

CELT'S

BRITONS

JUTES

SAXONS

JUTES

THE SAXONS

These Germanic settlers established trade links with their homelands after arriving in Britain, leaving typically European artefacts in their wake.

SUTTON HOO HELMET

This silver-embellished Anglo-Saxon helmet was found in the royal burial site of Sutton Hoo, East Anglia.



PICTISH RAIDS

During Roman rule, the frontier of Hadrian's Wall was constantly guarded against **Pictish raids**. In the fifth century, the northerners' attacks became much more frequent.

CUDDESDON BOWL

Anglo-Saxons were good with glass - this brilliant blue bowl was produced in c600 AD.



BEAD NECKLACE

Unlike Roman jewellery (see below) the Anglo-Saxons preferred beaded adornments. This one features glass and amber embellishments.



CARROT AMPHORA

This distinctive root vegetable vessel was used to import exotic fruits into Roman Exeter. This trade link would continue long after the end of Roman rule.



ROMAN RISE

What we now know as Cornwall and Devon as well as parts of Somerset was, in the Dark Ages, the **kingdom of Dumnonia**. Archaeological research suggests that this region actually became **more Romanised** after the Empire retreated than it had been during Roman rule.

ROMAN BRACELET

This ornate bracelet was buried in Suffolk in the fifth century - such jewellery continued to be traded in the west.



POTTERY AMPHORAE

At over a metre tall, these amphorae would have been used for transporting oil, vinegar and wine in large quantities.





THE BIG STORY KING ARTHUR & THE DARK AGES

WROXETER

Wroxeter Roman City in Shropshire, or *Viroconium Cornoviorum*, was once the fourth largest city in Roman Britain. Founded in the first century AD as a legionary fortress, it later grew into a thriving city. Wroxeter was inhabited until the seventh century, when it was abandoned after the region was invaded by Anglo-Saxons. Today, the site is open to the public, offering visitors a first-hand look at a post-Roman city in ruin.



BATHS

Wroxeter's municipal baths were located in the heart of the city. The typical Roman baths were built c120-150 AD, with cold, warm and heated rooms.

WATLING STREET

The city is dissected by Watling Street, which went from Dover up to Wroxeter and all the way on to Chester.

CATTLE MARKET

It is thought that many of Wroxeter's wealthy inhabitants generated their riches from trading livestock in this area.



BATHS BASILICA

Next to the baths was an exercise hall, which, in Roman times, would have been a popular social gathering space.

AREA OF INDUSTRY

Wroxeter's industrial centre thrived with metal works, leather-making sites and other noisy mechanical tasks – hence the lack of homes nearby.

3

LIFE AND TIMES

After the Romans left, how did everyday life change in Britain?

Towns were key to the Mediterranean concept of civilisation and to the economic and social success of the Roman Empire. In Britain, the town formed the hub of Roman life, each administering a block of land and implementing Roman law.

Historically speaking, there is often little to guide us when it comes to explaining what happened to these urban centres at the end

of the Roman period. However, archaeological excavation undertaken in a number of British cities has shown that although 'town life', in the sense of civic organisation and building, did diminish in significance from the fourth century AD, life in the towns certainly did continue, albeit in a very non-Mediterranean way. Many show evidence of food production, manufacture, trade and elite settlement from the time. Much of the

new building works comprised simple timber structures, and left a less-significant footprint than earlier constructions made of brick, concrete and stone.

Further clues as to what happened to towns and their change in function and status may be found in their modern names, most of which possesses the 'chester', 'ceaster', 'caster', or 'caer' element, derived from the Latin *castrum*, meaning fort (Winchester, for example). By the end of Roman rule, these towns had become the focal point of discrete states or petty kingdoms, each with a distinctive leader, territory and agenda. Some towns, such as Winchester, prospered, becoming key centres of power in centuries that followed. Others, such as Silchester and Caerwent, became marginalised and declined significantly in status.

5,000

The number of citizens Wroxeter had in its heyday

"THERE IS OFTEN LITTLE TO GUIDE US WHEN TRYING TO EXPLAIN WHAT HAPPENED TO THESE URBAN CENTRES AFTER THE ROMAN PERIOD"



LIFE AFTER ROME
LEFT: The tombstone of 'Cunorix', a man from post-Roman Wroxeter, who died between AD 475-500.

BELOW: The replica town house at Wroxeter, which was built using traditional Roman methods, offers insight into daily life



FORUM

This square was the main administrative centre of the town, and it also housed the town's markets. These stone pads, found in the forum remains, imply that basic timber structures were built here after the Romans left.

RIVER

The River Severn, or the *Sabrina*, as it was known to the Romans, was a key source of water for the settlement and was used for transportation.

HOT IN HERE

The underfloor heating system in Wroxeter's baths was a typically Roman design. The floor rested on **tile pillars**, around which hot air was pumped. The remains of the system can still be seen.



THE GENDER DIVIDE THE ROLE OF WOMEN

Judging by the quantity of strong female characters appearing in Welsh, Breton and Irish literature, when combined with the number of female saints recorded within the western Christian church, it would appear that Celtic society was more egalitarian than that of the Germanic Saxon. In the latter, women often passed from the 'protection' of their father to that of their husband. Much, of course, depended on social status, but Celtic women appear more frequently as politicians, land owners and war-leaders in their own right, whereas early English literature places greater emphasis upon 'traditional' roles within the family and at home.

Having said that, women in both the Celtic West and Saxon East had a better deal within society. In contrast to the preceding patriarchal world of Rome, or the predominantly macho culture of Normans that was to follow, females at this time had both property and business rights. Indeed, in early English Law, women's property and rights, whatever their status, were protected, and they received financial compensation independent from anything that their husbands, fathers or brothers may receive.

TALK THE TALK LANGUAGE BARRIER

The official language of the Roman Empire was Latin and, to get on in life, whether in the political or military sphere, people had to be able to read, speak and understand it. Few may have been truly fluent speakers, however, and most Britons appear to have retained their native forms of speech for the vast majority of transactions and conversations.

As British 'Celtic' was a spoken, rather than a written, language, Latin was used in order to record or transmit ideas, especially within the church. As a result, Latin survived, to a lesser degree, in the western half of Britain, although it made no significant contribution to the languages that followed. By the fourth and fifth centuries, the population of the eastern British seaboard was becoming gradually more 'German', in that more objects of Germanic and Scandinavian origin appeared and Saxon forms of expression – 'Old English' – were more commonplace. The

western seaboard, an area largely unaffected by Saxon migration or trade with the Germanic world, stayed more resolutely 'Celtic' in outlook, presumably through contact with Ireland and north-west France. More Celtic-style artefacts appeared in settlements and cemeteries while the Celtic language flourished, forming the basis of modern Welsh, Cornish and Breton.

UNIQUE WORDS

A rare example of British Celtic in written form





BRITAIN GOES BACK TO BASICS

With Roman towns in decline, home life took what appears to be a step back

During the post-Roman period, houses were built of less durable materials, such as timber, daub and thatch, and so are not as visible as the stone- and brick-built Roman structures that preceded them. The typical structure within both the Saxon and Celtic world appears to have been the 'longhouse', a timber hall in which both human and animal populations often shared eating, living and sleeping space.

In the west, British longhouses have been found next to malting ovens – essential for brewing

beer. This implies that drinking was a significant communal activity which thrived, despite the lack of access to Mediterranean wine. *Beowulf*, a piece of English literature to survive from the period, suggests that feasting and drinking also played a major part of Saxon life.

Little clothing from the time survives, but the amount of weaving finds, together with metal brooches, suggests that homemade woollen and leather items were common fashion choices.

18

The number of trees required to build the average Anglo-Saxon home



LOOM IN THE ROOM

A crucial part of Dark Ages life, weaving looms were common household items. Finds such as loom weights and spindle whorls have been found at West Stow.

ANGLO-SAXON VILLAGE WEST STOW

During the Anglo-Saxon era, West Stow in modern-day Suffolk was an unassuming, largely timber-built village. At some point after the seventh century, the settlement was abandoned, but what the citizens left behind provided precious clues about daily life...

HAIR DO

This fragment of a sixth-century hair comb, with its ornate decoration, is carved out of bone.

DRINKING RITUAL

This drinking horn with silver mounts would have been used for ceremonial drinking by the elite of the early Anglo-Saxon world.

FUNERARY VESSEL

Cremation urns such as this were common in Anglo-Saxon communities.



INDOOR FIRE

Each longhouse had a simple fire, which was used for warmth, cooking and light. It was in the centre of the wooden home, which had no chimney.



SHELF LIFE

There was no upstairs - families and their animals slept on the ground floor - but rudimentary wall shelves were used for storage.



“DRINKING WAS A SIGNIFICANT COMMUNAL ACTIVITY WHICH THRIVED, DESPITE THE LACK OF ACCESS TO WINE”

CENTRAL HALL

The original settlement at West Stow was centred around a large hall - likely where a warrior chief or village elder would have lived. Small groups of family homes surrounded this larger hall.

TRIPLE THATCH

These replica thatched roofs are made of reed mix, laid over a middle layer of water reed and a base of heather. Warm and largely waterproof, but far from long-lasting or flame retardant.

MODEL VILLAGE

Rebuilt between the seventies and today, the village has been reconstructed using the same building **know how, tools and materials** as the Anglo-Saxons would have had.



SEWING TOOLS

These pig-bone needles date from the sixth century. With such large eyes, they were used for wool, rather than fine thread.

THE GOOD LIFE

Re-enactors at West Stow act out the simple life of the average Anglo-Saxon



THE BIG STORY KING ARTHUR & THE DARK AGES

CHAPEL IN THE CLIFF
This Pembrokeshire chapel
was built in honour of
St Govan

SAINT ON THE RUN

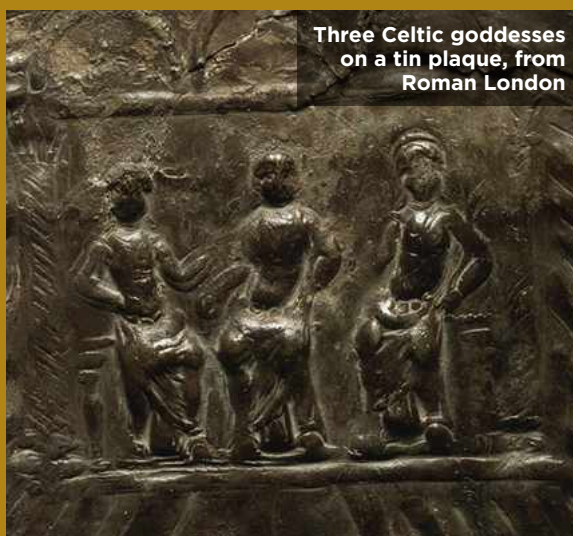
Although St Govan's chapel was mostly built in the 14th century, it was constructed in **typical Dark Ages style**, possibly to honour the saint it was named after. St Govan was a sixth-century holy hermit, who fled to these Pembrokeshire cliffs during **Irish raids**.

**“BRITAIN BECAME
A MELTING POT
OF CULTURE
AND RELIGION”**

DARK AGE GODS

WHO DID THEY WORSHIP?

Multiple religions were circulating across Britain in the fifth and sixth centuries AD. Indigenous and Roman gods, worshipped in temples from the first century, were in gradual decline as Christianity spread ever westwards into areas of Britain previously unconquered by Rome. From the start of the fifth century, along the eastern seaboard of England, a new pantheon of deities was being introduced by Germanic immigrants.



Three Celtic goddesses
on a tin plaque, from
Roman London

WELCOME DEITIES

The Romans tolerated indigenous British deities, merging them with their own gods such as Jupiter, Juno, Minerva and Mars. In part, this was to quell the possibility of rebellion.



A mosaic of Christ found in
a Roman Villa in Dorset,
dated to the fourth century

CHANGE IN ROME

From the early fourth century, Christianity became the official religion of Rome, and all other faiths were increasingly outlawed. However, in Britain, both Pagan and Christian faiths continued.

5

RELIGIOUS SCENE

There was no one religion in Dark Ages Britain – different faiths flourished around the isles

During this confused time, Britain became a melting pot of culture and religion. People of the Germanic Saxon world brought their complex belief system with them, introducing multiple deities to the isles.

Away from the Germanic areas of Britain, the picture is a little less clear. The Roman Empire had tolerated earlier British gods and permitted their continued worship – even adopting some of them in Roman culture. From the early fourth

40

The number of clerics who accompanied Augustine to Kent

century, however, Christianity became the official religion of Rome, and afterwards all other faiths were, eventually, outlawed throughout the Empire. It is doubtful whether such an edict would have had much effect upon distant Britain, non-Christian temples being built here up to the end of the fourth century. There is good evidence for churches at this time as well, so it would seem that, in western Britain at least, Christianity was just one of a number of religions in circulation.



FOUNDING FATHER
St Augustine, considered the first Archbishop of Canterbury, who 'corrected' British Christianity

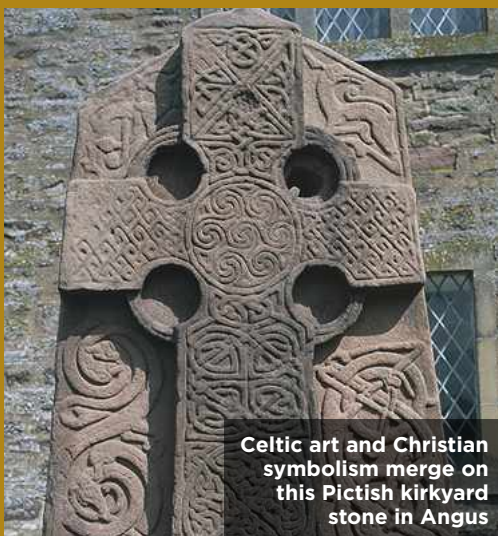
WHAT'S HIS NAME?

Known down the centuries as **Woden, Wodan, Wotan and Odin**, this chief god of Norse origin would have been called Woden by the Saxons of Dark Ages Britain.

Ancient figure of Woden, found in Denmark, from the first century BC

PAGAN PEOPLE

Germanic settlers believed in many divine beings, from their chief god Woden and Queen Frige, to others such as Tiw (for war) and Thor (for thunder), all of whom later provided the names for days of the week in English (Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday, Friday).



Celtic art and Christian symbolism merge on this Pictish kirkyard stone in Angus

CHRISTIANITY DEVELOPS

The Christian faith was spread into Ireland and north Britain by missionaries, like the Romano Briton Patricus (St Patrick). A unique, 'Celtic' form of Christianity developed (see right).

A DIFFERENT COURSE

BRITISH CHRISTIANITY

In those areas of western Britain unaffected by Saxon culture, Christianity survived, although it didn't receive universal acceptance. Archaeological evidence suggests that, where it did thrive, it took on a distinctly British feel, Celtic art influencing the style of Christian grave markers and other religious art forms. Certainly by the late-sixth century, the Papacy viewed British Christians as potential heretics whose beliefs had deviated from the 'true' faith as defined in Catholic doctrine.

In AD 596, Pope Gregory I sent a mission, under the leadership of Augustine, Prior of a monastery in Rome, to the Saxon kingdom of Kent. Ostensibly, Augustine was sent to convert King Æthelbert to the faith (although his wife Bertha was already a Christian). But his orders seem also to ensure that the 'correct' version of Christianity was being practiced elsewhere, as heresy was considered to be a worse sin – and certainly far more dangerous to the authority of the Pope – than outright Paganism. Today it is difficult to see how, precisely, the two branches of Christianity deviated, although the Celtic Church may have been influenced by the teachings of Pelagius, a British bishop who had preached that man had not been tainted by the original sin of Adam and Eve, and that one could navigate a path through life without any divine aid. Augustine's mission to Britain ultimately proved so successful that he is today acknowledged as the father of the English Church and first Archbishop of Canterbury.



TIMELINE Highlights of

Whether he was real or not, King Arthur's Britain needed a hero – it was a

AD407

Constantine III, a Roman General, is proclaimed Emperor by troops in Britain. He crosses to Gaul (now France) with his army in order to fight his cause.



409

The remnants of Roman government in Britain reject the authority of both Constantine and the legitimate Roman Emperor Honorius.

410

Honorius acknowledges that Britain is no longer part of his Empire, and instructs the cities there to look to their own defence.



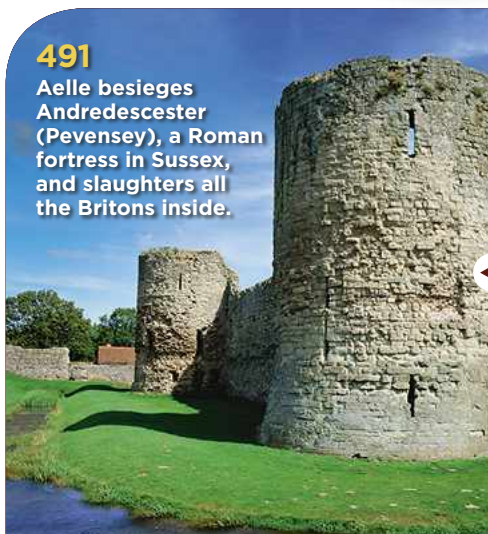
428

The first major incursion into Britain of Saxon invaders may have occurred this year.



491

Aelle besieges Andredecster (Pevensey), a Roman fortress in Sussex, and slaughters all the Britons inside.



477

According to the *Anglo-Saxon Chronicle*, Saxon war leader Aelle comes to Britain with his three sons. Aelle establishes the kingdom of Sussex and is later cited as the first *Bretwalda*, – 'wide ruler' or 'Britain ruler'.

470s

British successes of this time are later credited by Gildas to Romano British war leader Ambrosius Aurelianus.

LATE 450s

Further Saxon groups arrive, and revolt against their British masters. Vortigern is killed.



The war lord Vortigern may have been caught in a deadly blaze

c495

In the Siege of Badon Hill, the Britons are victorious. Later, Gildas credits this victory to Ambrosius Aurelianus, although following writers cite King Arthur as the British leader.



Badbury Rings, Dorset, is one of the many possible sites of the Badon Hill battle

501

The semi-mythical Saxon settler Port and his sons Bieda and Maegla come to Britain in a renewed wave of Saxon migration.

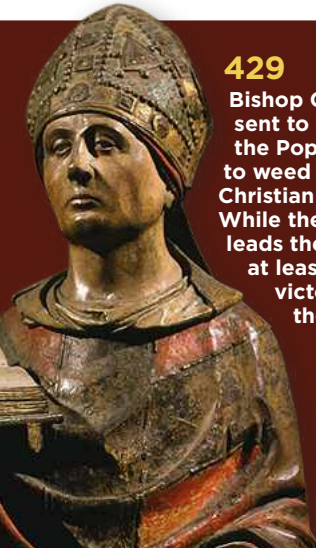
508

Cerdic and Cynric become the most prominent war-leaders in south-west Britain, founding the 'House of Wessex'. The *Anglo-Saxon Chronicle* claims them as English kings although, as they have British names, this is by no means certain.



the Dark Ages

land of mayhem with invasions, war lords and little authority



429

Bishop Germanus is sent to Britain by the Pope in order to weed out Christian heresy. While there, he leads the Britons to at least one major victory against the Saxons.

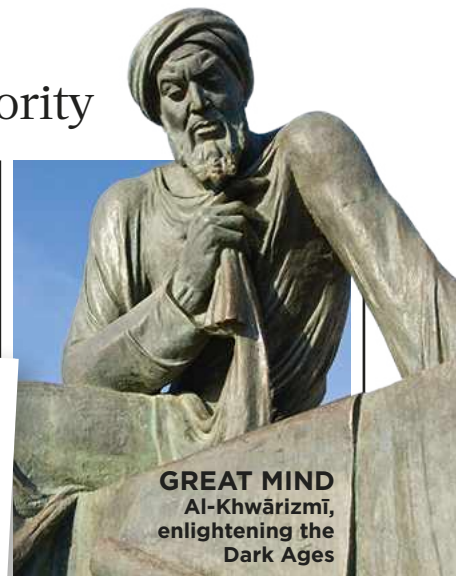


432

Patricus (St Patrick), son of a Romano British aristocrat, begins his missionary work in Ireland.

435

Vortigern, who may later have been recorded as *superbus tyrannus* ('arrogant despot') by writer Gildas, rises to a position of power in Britain.



GREAT MIND
Al-Khwārizmī,
enlightening the
Dark Ages

THE DARK AGES...

HOW DARK WERE THEY?

Originally, the 'Dark Ages' covered a period of Western European history much greater than it does now. When the phrase first appeared, it encompassed the years from the decline of the Roman Empire to the start of the Renaissance in the 14th century. The name was derived from the fact that, for centuries, this was a time that historians knew very little about. But in the 19th century, more and more was discovered about the period, and soon the Dark Ages were restricted to the end of Roman rule in Britain, to around AD 800.

Most modern scholars, however, prefer to use the terms Early Middle Ages, or Late Antiquity, to cover this same time frame, because the original name implies that the period was especially barbaric and intellectually bleak. While this may, to a certain extent, be true of the British Isles, it is not reflective of Europe – where architecture, language and religion flourished – let alone the wider world. Indeed, in the Islamic East, intellect was booming, with eighth-century mathematicians such as Al-Khwārizmī developing advanced concepts like algebra – hardly unenlightened thinking.

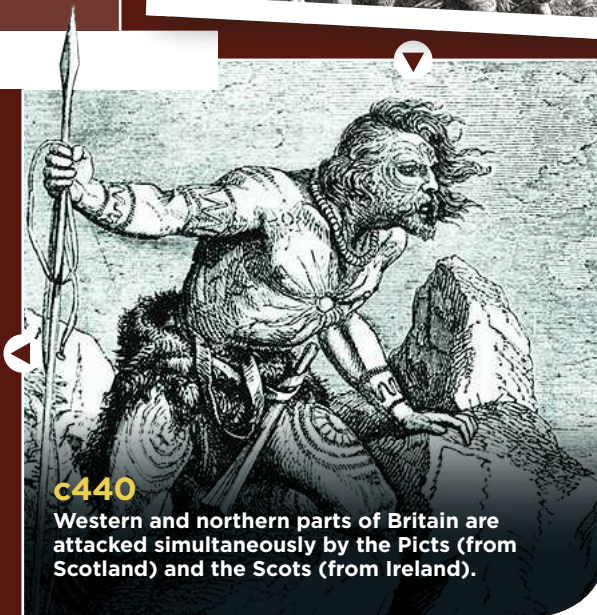


c450

Saxon mercenaries, under the leadership of Hengist and Horsa, are invited to Britain by Vortigern in order to counter the Pictish threat, and settle in east Kent.

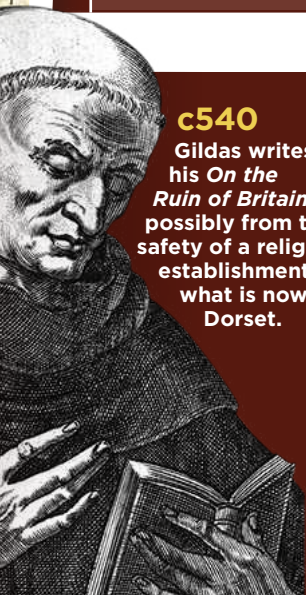
446

Various British leaders, possibly including Vortigern himself, appeal to Rome for help against the 'barbarians'.



c440

Western and northern parts of Britain are attacked simultaneously by the Picts (from Scotland) and the Scots (from Ireland).

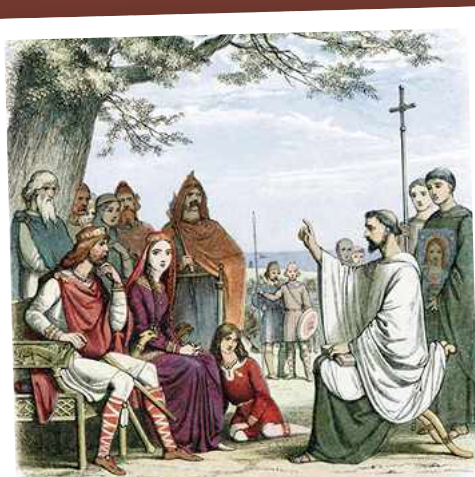


c540

Gildas writes his *On the Ruin of Britain*, possibly from the safety of a religious establishment in what is now Dorset.

596

Augustine is sent by Pope Gregory I on a mission to convert the Saxon kings of south England to Christianity.



731

St Bede, writing from Jarrow, Northumbria, finishes the *Historia Ecclesiastica Gentis Anglorum* (The Ecclesiastical History of the English People), the first history of Britain written from an English perspective.



The Harrington-West War Chronicles

West War Chronicles by Bridget Beresford & Major Richard Waygood MBE

HOME BY CHRISTMAS

Book 1 tells the compelling story the young men who went to war in Northern France 1914. A Cavalry Captain leads his unit men from one hazardous escapade and into another. The many twists and turns will keep you turning pages as you experience with the soldiers, the dangers of war-torn Europe. The Hun is not the only enemy. The soldiers have to contend with traitors and spies on their own side. The emotional roller coaster of this well written, well researched book will leave you wanting more.

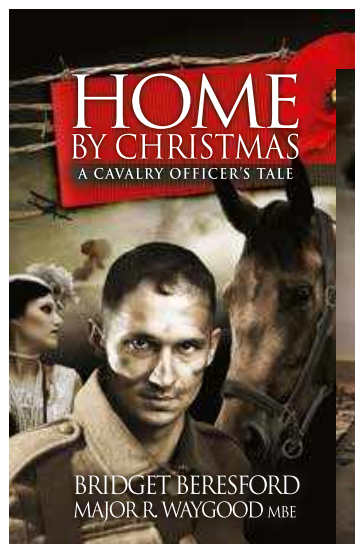
LIONS GUARD THE WAY

Book 2 Captain Andrew Harrington-West is posted to East Africa in 1915 to take part in The Forgotten War. He and members of his old regiment have enlisted in the King's East African Cavalry; their orders are to mount a guard over the Mombasa to Nairobi railway line. The cavalymen, fresh from the trenches in Northern France, have to learn quickly how to fight in the bush as the Germans with their army of askaris are past-masters in guerrilla warfare. As well as the Hun, the British soldiers have to face the remoteness and heat of the African bush, wild animals, traitors and spies.

THE AUTHORS

Richard Waygood joined the Household Cavalry as a Trooper at the age of 16 and left 30 years later as a Major. **Bridget Beresford** spent several years in Northern France where she heard many anecdotes from Great War veterans and their surviving relatives.

The books are available on Amazon.co.uk in kindle and paperback.
www.amazon.co.uk/Home-By-Christmas-Cavalryofficers/dp/1909425974/



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IN THE ROUND
The 13th-century
Round Table in
Winchester was
built in King
Arthur's honour

THE BIG STORY
KING ARTHUR &
THE DARK AGES



HEAD OF THE TABLE

The famous Round Table first appears in Robert Wace's verse chronicle, *Roman de Brut* (1155). When he gathered his knights around this circular desk, King Arthur put himself on an **equal playing field** with them.

KING ARTHUR

He is Britain's eternal hero, the leader of legend whose adventures and exploits have been told and retold for over a millennium. But Arthur's 'real' life is a mystery – one we may never get to the bottom of...



THE BIG STORY KING ARTHUR & THE DARK AGES

The legend of King Arthur is one of the most potent, successful and well-known tales in world mythology, but what are the origins of the “once and future King”, and can we glimpse a real Arthur behind the fog of myth and fantasy? Was there really a Dark Ages guerrilla leader whose campaign against the Saxon horde inspired all these later stories?

Perhaps the biggest problem for anyone trying to make sense of the years following the collapse of Roman Britain is the lack of contemporary sources. Thankfully, the writings of Dark Ages author Gildas shine a light in the gloom. Gildas’ world, as presented in his sixth-century *On the Ruin of Britain*, is a terrifying one of anarchy and violence. In it, the Britons are defeated and demoralised, cowed by their Saxon foe. Sadly, there is no room in his work for Arthur – indeed, Gildas is critical of all the British kings, although he does speak favourably of a British general named Ambrosius Aurelianus, to whom he credits victory at the Siege of Mount Badon.

There are other early sources. *The History of the Kings of Britain*, for example, is an epic

work compiled by Geoffrey of Monmouth in around 1136, purporting to chronicle the rulers of Britain from earliest times until the seventh century AD. In addition to this, there is the evidence provided by the *History of the Britons* – a variety of disparate texts which today survives in different locations and wildly differing forms. There does not seem to be an ‘author’ in the conventional sense for these, although some have ascribed the

“THIS IS EPIC STUFF, AND ARTHUR TAKES THE LEAD AS THE PREMIER DARK AGES SUPERHERO”

whole to someone called ‘Nennius’. A few of these versions may postdate Geoffrey’s work, although the majority were clearly set down a good few hundred years before, possibly as early as the seventh century AD.

FIRST GLIMPSE

Nennius’s account provides arguably the first definitive reference to a character called Arthur, when describing 12 epic battles “fought

against the Saxons” with the support of the “kings of the Britons”. In this, Arthur is credited as being the supreme commander, the *dux bellorum* (or Duke of the wars), in charge of all available British forces. The battles in which he is victorious take place at the River Glein, the River Dubglas (where there are four separate encounters), the River Bassas, the Caledonian Forest, Guinnion Fortress, the City of the Legion, the River Tribruit, and then at Agned and Badon Hill. At Guinnin, the eighth battle, Arthur is cited as carrying “the image of the Holy Mary” on his shoulder while at Badon “960 men fell from a single charge of Arthur’s and no one killed them save he alone”. This is epic stuff,



THE LEGEND IS BORN

LEFT: Arthur leads his men into battle in this 14th-century illustration

TOP: The King gathers his knights around the fabled round table

ABOVE: In this 15th-century image, the affair between Lancelot and Guinevere thickens the plot



THE MATTER OF BRITAIN

It all started with just a handful of Arthurian stories

The 'Matter of Britain' is the generic term used to cover all the earliest literary sources describing Arthur and the non-English kings. Chief among these is *The Gododdin* (4), a Welsh poem that commemorates a doomed assault by a British war band upon Catraeth (now Catterick, Yorkshire). Compiled sometime around AD 600, the main significance of *The Gododdin* is that it contains the earliest mention of an Arthur, when it notes that one warrior, although brave, "was no Arthur". Despite becoming a name of note within the aristocracy, the deeds of the original 'Arthur' were not set down until the early ninth century, in the pages of the *History of the Britons* (3).

The *History of the Britons* does not present a detailed life of Arthur, but it does record the key 12 battles of his career. The list is difficult to interpret, place names being garbled, and it is clear that later writers added heroic detail, crediting Arthur with superhuman powers of endurance. Whoever the original author was, they were writing from a distinctly pro-British (and anti-English) perspective. A different bias appears in *On the Ruin of Britain* by the sixth-century cleric Gildas. He portrays his fellow Britons as lazy, lustful and degenerate, while the migrant English are an Old Testament-style plague, bringing divine punishment from a vengeful God. The *History of the Kings of Britain* (2) by Geoffrey of Monmouth represents the last piece of the Matter of Britain and, although written down in the 12th century, is shaped by a desire to counter an overtly English history.

53 1
ay adred uen ont de fuir cure
E my aypt wlt meure en auent
ont d'auure fu la parail
E n le entre de Cornuall
loer sen wlt le Roi d'entendre
E t'auu corp en otre li defendre
A rebur iunt ad des chivaliers
F lus sont ge. cent ouilliers
A itant sei sunt entre feru
Ampar i ferient p'ait vdu
G it si d'ampar la pe de
E o plaine fu des mozt comment
O ay si oxdred en jostour
E t' de el gent tot li plusin
A rebur si la jesse ne ment
F n iloe natre moztelement

PROTAG POWERS

In various accounts of Arthur's adventures, he develops greater and greater **levels of endurance**. For some, the protagonist even **becomes immortal**.



MORE THAN ARTHUR STORY

In a section of Nennius's work, the history of the world is delivered in **six ages**. It also provides descriptions of the various **inhabitants of Britain**, a chapter on St Patrick and details of 28 British cities, as well as reporting on Arthur's exploits.

2

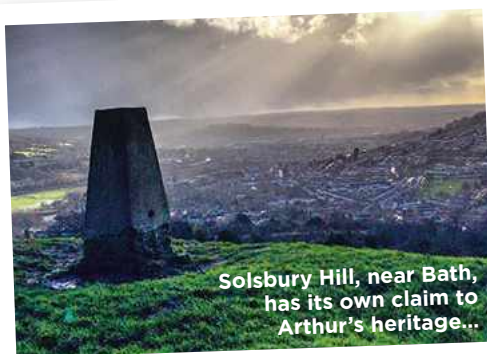
3

4

Writer and translator, Geoffrey of Monmouth

THE KING IN INK

- 1: Arthur receives a nasty blow in Robert Wace's French version of events, from 1155
- 2: A copy of Geoffrey of Monmouth's tome is preserved at the British Library
- 3: Some 35 editions of *The History of the Britons* remain to this day
- 4: *The Gododdin* survives in a single c1265 manuscript called *The Book of Aneirin*



Solsbury Hill, near Bath, has its own claim to Arthur's heritage...



...as does the late-Bronze Age site of Liddington Castle in Wiltshire

ARTHUR'S PLACES

Where's the King from?
No one knows...

Many writers, historians and archaeologists have tried to provide a solid geographical placement for the 'real' Arthur. The trouble is, as a possible composite, created from a variety of Dark Ages sources, the character may derive from any number of locations. The earliest references to specific places linked to an Arthur character is the battle-list provided by Nennius, one possible author of *History of the Britons*, in the ninth century. Nennius cites 12 great battles in which the once and future king emerged victorious, but these are almost hopelessly garbled, bearing little resemblance to real places today.

The "Caledonian Forest" he names is probably north of the Roman Hadrian's Wall, while the battle at "the City of Legion" could be York, Chester or Caerleon in south-east Wales, all being the former sites of Roman legionary fortresses. Badon Hill, scene of Arthur's final victory, has proved the most difficult to place. A wide variety of sites, from Badbury Rings in Dorset, Liddington Castle in Wiltshire and Solsbury Hill in Somerset to hillforts in Herefordshire, Wales and north England have all been suggested over the last 200 years.

and Arthur takes the lead as the premier Dark Ages superhero.

Next comes Geoffrey of Monmouth, early-12th-century author of the *History of the Kings of Britain*. Unfortunately, we know next to nothing about the man nor what inspired him to write his great work, which is a shame for it is he – more than any other – who helped create and popularise the myth of King Arthur. Geoffrey's tome features, for the first time, the whole life of Arthur, rather than just a list of his major battles, from his birth at Tintagel Castle in Cornwall, the son of Uther Pendragon, through various struggles against enemies in both Britain and Europe, with his sword Caliburn (Excalibur). On the way, Geoffrey describes Arthur's love for Ganhumara (Guinevere), the bravery of colleagues such as Gawain, Merlin the magician, the final treachery of Mordred, and the last battle at which, mortally wounded, Arthur is carried to the Isle of

5

The number of chapters that Geoffrey of Monmouth uses to introduce Merlin to Arthur's story

Avalon. Essentially, Geoffrey set the template for the tales of Arthur that were to follow. Unfortunately, we get no real clue for where all these stories come from. Many have since speculated that he either made it all

up, or that he simply conflated the exploits of others, such as Gildas' hero Ambrosius Aurelianus, into a single composite character.

ROLE MODEL

Of all the various petty British kings jostling for power or fighting against the Saxon, Scottish or Pictish invaders in the fifth and sixth centuries, the strongest candidate for a 'real' inspirational Arthur is almost certainly that of Ambrosius Aurelianus. Frustratingly, just as with Arthur, we know little about the man himself, other than he led a pro-British force against the Saxons, winning a great victory

ROMANTIC OLD THING

BELOW: Arthur rides with his knights, in an illustration from Tennyson's epic retelling
RIGHT: The sword Excalibur is returned to the Lady of the Lake, in 1890s Art Nouveau style
BOTTOM: Edward Burne-Jones's painting of Arthur, as he falls into his last sleep in Avalon



THE MAN'S A FAN

The 19th century artist Edward Burne-Jones was a huge fan of all things Arthurian. As well as spending **17 years** on this, 'The Last Sleep of Arthur in Avalon', he also **designed a set** for a play about the myth.



TINTAGEL

An Arthurian spot on the Cornish coast?

Geoffrey of Monmouth provided the first link between Tintagel and Arthur, claiming it was here that Arthur was conceived, in a union between King Uther Pendragon and Igerna, wife of his enemy Gorlois. We do not know why Geoffrey chose this relatively obscure place on the north Cornish coast for the origin for his hero, but he may have been drawing on older sources. Archaeology has revealed the site to have been a high-status settlement of the fifth and sixth centuries with trade links to the Mediterranean. By the 13th century, so strong had the association with Arthur become, that Richard – one of King John's sons – built a castle here in order to tie himself and his ambition to the myth. The area no longer possessed any strategic value, and the castle was in ruins by the early 15th century.

LAND OF KINGS?

Many Dark Ages finds have surfaced in and around Tintagel, **Mediterranean pottery** and even glass among them. These high-value, traded items imply that it was home to the petty kings of Dumnonia (Devon and Cornwall), if not Arthur.

LOCATION, LOCATION, LOCATION

MAIN: Tintagel would have been easy to defend, with clear views all around
BELOW: The ruins of the 13th-century castle



– stalling the western English advance – at a battle centred upon Badon Hill. There have been many candidates for 'Badon', a whole range of sites being identified in Dorset, Wiltshire and what used to be Avon, and further afield in Pembrokeshire and Cumbria. Truth be told, we shall probably never know where Badon was nor how significant the fight really was. The character of Ambrosius, however, was certainly important enough to be remembered in Welsh literature and therefore, just perhaps, his life went on to inspire all later tales of Arthur.

Geoffrey's history was a medieval bestseller, being popular not just with a British audience, but also with Saxon, Norman and European readers. Within a generation, significant numbers of Arthurian tales sprang up across continental Europe

and around the Mediterranean. Arguably the most important of these later works were the romances penned by the French poet, Chrétien de Troyes in the latter part of the 12th century. De Troyes introduced the concept of courtly love to the Arthurian myth, shifting the emphasis away from the heroic, blood-soaked world of the post-Roman warrior. Most potent of all his additions were the introduction of Lancelot, and his adulterous relationship with Queen

Guinevere, and Perceval, whose quest for the Holy Grail would further inspire poets, novelists, artists and filmmakers.

CHIVALRY IS BORN

Between them, Geoffrey, and later de Troyes, created a myth of Arthur the King that was to greatly influence a number of medieval monarchs, who eagerly drew upon the tales of chivalry and heroic combat. Edward I, for example, established a number of tournaments based around the idea of Arthur's egalitarian

“WITHIN A GENERATION, ARTHURIAN TALES SPRANG UP ACROSS EUROPE AND AROUND THE MEDITERRANEAN”

'round table'. He even went so far as to create, in around 1290, a physical wooden table, which today can still be seen in the Great Hall of Winchester Castle. And Edward III created the Order of the Garter in 1348 – a fellowship of knights whose code was modelled upon Arthur's legendary chivalric band of loyal gentlemen.

Other Norman kings, such as Henry II, were keen to hijack the Arthurian myth as part of

their attempt to subjugate Wales, adapting British mythology to suit their own ends. In 1191, Henry ordered the exhumation of two bodies, thought at the time to be those of Arthur and his Queen, from the hallowed ground of Glastonbury Abbey. In 'proving' that these were indeed the mortal remains of Arthur and Guinevere, Henry's royal propaganda machine could demonstrate that

not only was the great hero now in Norman hands, but also that he was very dead and was not going to come back and help the Welsh people anytime soon.

Henry Tudor, following his defeat of the last Plantagenet king, Richard III, in

1485, also found the Arthur story useful, taking it as a way of legitimizing his own (decidedly shaky) claim to the throne. The Tudors were of Welsh descent and Henry VII, as he was to become, made sure that his first-born son and heir to the throne of England was named Arthur. He even had him baptised with great ceremony at Winchester, a town that contemporaries thought was originally Camelot. How different might British history



EXPERT VIEW

Miles Russell,
British archaeologist
and lecturer

IT IS VIRTUALLY IMPOSSIBLE TO GET TO THE 'TRUTH' OF KING ARTHUR

What is it about King Arthur that still grips us today?

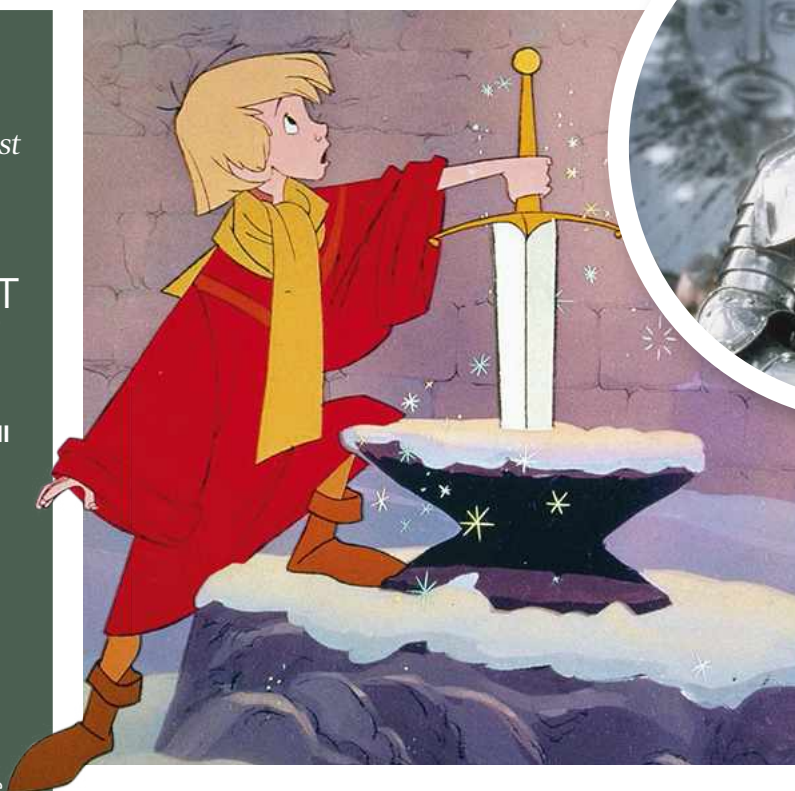
With its themes of brotherhood, magic, love and betrayal woven through the classic underdog story, Arthur's tale has become, quite literally, timeless. There is also the aspect of a 'hidden' or secret history, which has become popular in recent years. The idea that a bit of archaeological detection, mixed with a new-age mysticism and counter-conspiracy theory (in the style of *The Da Vinci Code*) will somehow expose this 'lost truth' of our past.

Did he really exist?

Given how much has been added to the story over the last millennium, it is virtually impossible to ever get to the 'truth' of King Arthur. There were, undoubtedly, many warriors of the post-Roman period whose exploits were commemorated in poem and song and it is possible that Arthur is a composite of several different characters (much like Robin Hood). The best candidate we have from the limited sources is Ambrosius Aurelianus, a Romano British general who is (briefly) mentioned by the sixth-century cleric Gildas.

Will we ever find Mount Badon, the scene of Arthur's greatest battle?

Battles often leave little archaeological trace. Once the fighting has stopped, bodies are retrieved for burial while discarded armour and weapons are recycled. Occasionally, archaeological or metal-detecting surveys find traces of shattered armour and fragments of bone from known conflict sites, but the trouble with Mount Badon is that we don't really know where it was. Gildas, our only source, was remarkably vague on the location. Until anyone can narrow down the 'real' Badon from the list of over 50 possible sites, searching for archaeological remains is a pretty futile exercise.



**20TH-CENTURY
SUPERHERO**
INSET: Nigel Terry as King
Arthur in *Excalibur* (1981)
MAIN: Disney's hero was
small and scrawny in *The
Sword in the Stone* (1963)

"HE IS THE DEFENDER OF LIBERTY, SEEKER OF TRUTH AND WARRIOR FROM AN OLDER, SIMPLER 'GOLDEN' AGE"

have been if Prince Arthur had lived to rule England, together with his wife Catherine of Aragon, rather than dying childless in 1502, succession passing to his younger brother, the future Henry VIII?

IMPRINTED IN SOCIETY

The development of the medieval chivalric Arthur reached its climax in Thomas Malory's late-15th-century epic romance *Morte d'Arthur* (*Death of Arthur*), the first comprehensive account, in English, of the King and his court. Immensely popular, Malory's account achieved widespread success, and a wider readership than all earlier works celebrating Arthur, when it became one of the first books to be printed in Britain under the direction of William Caxton, late in 1485.

A huge resurgence of interest in the Arthurian legend came in the early 19th century, during great medieval and Romantic Gothic revivals. William Wordsworth and Alfred, Lord Tennyson published new poetic works with their own interpretations of the Arthurian myth. In turn, their works inspired further poets and artists, especially those within the Pre-Raphaelite movement (such as William Holman Hunt, John Everett Millais,

Dante Gabriel Rossetti and later William Morris and Edward Burne-Jones). Although damaged by the mechanised horror of World War I, general interest in the Romantic arts and the story of Arthur continued through the 20th century, finding a place in literature (especially in the works of TH White and TS Eliot), cinema and later, television.

For many, the power of Arthurian myth is derived from many sources. He is, of course, the brave underdog fighting a briefly successful, though ultimately doomed, war against the forces of evil. He is the true, pure-hearted hero, brought low by the treachery of those he held dear. He is the defender of liberty, seeker of truth and warrior from an older, simpler, 'golden' age. The fact that, in all later versions of the story, he does not die, nor is buried, having been wounded in one last epic battle and being taken to recover in the Isle of Avalon, of course, means that he can return to his people at the time of their greatest need. Over the years he has become a hero to both the right and left of the political spectrum, and to rich and poor alike. He is truly 'a man for all seasons' and all societies, whose story, reinvented with every generation, shows no sign of fading. ☉

1,200

The weight, in kilograms, of the c1290 Round Table in Winchester Castle

GET HOOKED

Your Dark Ages journey needn't end here – there's plenty more to see, read and watch

MUSEUMS AND MONUMENTS



▲ GLASTONBURY ABBEY

This atmospheric abbey is supposedly linked to the Isle of Avalon. Monks even claimed to have unearthed the remains of Arthur and Guinevere. www.glastonburyabbey.com

ALSO VISIT

- ▶ Wroxeter Roman City, Shropshire www.english-heritage.org.uk
- ▶ West Stow Anglo-Saxon Village, Suffolk www.weststow.org
- ▶ Tintagel, Cornwall www.english-heritage.org.uk

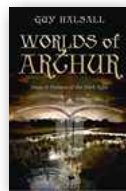
BOOKS



THE ONCE AND FUTURE KING (1958)

By T.H. White

This classic piece of fantasy literature brings together four of White's Arthurian novels.



WORLDS OF ARTHUR: FACTS AND FICTIONS OF THE DARK AGES

By Guy Halsall (2013)

A detailed examination of the evidence for King Arthur, which draws some interesting conclusions.

ALSO READ

- ▶ In Search Of The Dark Ages by Michael Wood
- ▶ Smashing Saxons part of the Horrible Histories series by Terry Deary
- ▶ Ancient Legends Retold: the Legend of Vortigern by Simon Heywood
- ▶ The Anglo-Saxon World Nicholas Higham and Martin Ryan

ON SCREEN



KING ARTHUR (2004)

Marketed as based on new archaeological evidence (it wasn't), this film has many failings, but it does at least *look* like fifth-century Britain.

ALSO WATCH

- ▶ Camelot (2011), a series shown on Channel 4 with Eva Green and Joseph Fiennes
- ▶ Disney's classic *The Sword in the Stone* (1963)

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**IN PICTURES
THE BERLIN
BLOCKADE**

**POST-WAR GERMANY WAS
DIVIDED INTO BRITISH,
AMERICAN, FRENCH
AND SOVIET SECTORS**

UNCHOSEN OCCUPATION

BERLIN PROTESTS

Thousands of Berliners gather at the ruined Reichstag on 9 September 1948, to protest against Communist rule in the eastern sector.

THE BERLIN BLOCKADE

The first major incident of the Cold War saw the Soviets close all supply routes to Berlin on 24 June 1948, leading to an 11-month airlift of food and fuel by the Western Allies...



SPLIT DECISION

Germany's future was in the hands of the four victorious Allies



DISUNITED NATIONS

DIVIDED WE STAND

In the aftermath of World War II, the victorious Allies disagree about how Germany's future should be shaped, notably its economy. The country is split into four sectors, with the capital, Berlin, a divided enclave within Soviet-controlled East Germany.



CHANGING THE GUARD

TENSIONS MOUNT

The Western Allies and the Soviets are at loggerheads over their plans for the reconstruction of post-war Germany. In June 1948, the Soviets withdraw from the Kommandatura, Berlin's governing body.

THE AIRLIFT BEGINS

MERCY MISSION

On 24 June 1948, the Soviets block all road, river and rail links to West Berlin in an attempt to force the British, French and Americans out. Two days later, the first US C-47 Dakotas, carrying food supplies, land at Tempelhof and Gatow airfields.



NEW ORDER

STATEMENT OF INTENT

By March 1948, the Soviet occupiers have stamped their mark on East Berlin. This huge poster of Stalin posted in front of a burned-out building indicates a determination to assert Communist control over the city and Germany - in the face of resistance from the German people.



TAKING FLIGHT

FLEEING WITH FUEL

In June 1948, and with uncanny prescience, a German pulls a cartload of wood back into the British Sector, just before the borders are closed by the Soviets in defiance of the Allies.



VITTLE SIGNS

MOMENTUM BUILDS

The American 'Operation Vittles' is launched on 26 June, and the British join the effort two days later with 'Operation Plainfare'. Within a month, the Western Allies are delivering 1,000 tons of supplies each day. At the airlift's peak, a supply plane lands at Tempelhof every 45 seconds. Seventy-eight aircrew died in plane crashes during the airlift.



**IN UNDER A YEAR, THE
AIRLIFT FLEW MORE THAN
200,000 FLIGHTS INTO BERLIN**

MILK RUN

ENSURING FRESH RATIONS

Most of the supplies delivered by air are, by necessity, non-perishable - fuel, salt, dehydrated foods and sugar. But smaller quantities of luxuries such as coffee and fresh goods including cheese and whole milk are delivered, too, the latter intended for children.



ALAMY X1, GETTY X2, PRESS ASSOCIATION X4

SUPPLY CHAIN

For 11 long months, the Allies kept the people of Berlin in food and fuel



SANTA CLAUS IS COMING TO TOWN

YOU'LL GO DOWN IN HISTORY

Gifts donated by US citizens are distributed by Santa - Lt John Konop of Astoria, NY - to Berlin's children at Christmas.



EVACUATION

WINTER'S COMING

German children board an RAF plane from Berlin to the western part of Germany. Since coal is scarce during the blockade, a programme has been instituted to evacuate children during the coldest part of winter.

BENCHMARK

BURNING DESIRES

Even the seats of public park benches are removed to supplement scant supplies of wood for burning during the harsh German winter.



STOCKING UP

PLANNING AHEAD

After many months of Soviet blockade, Berlin prepares by stockpiling food in warehouses as a buffer should relief lines be cut. Here, boxes of pineapple are stored away. The American military government calculates that nearly 1,400 tons of food are needed each day to sustain the people of Berlin.



SEARCHING FOR COAL

BLACK GOLD NUGGETS

Any coal flown into the city is used by factories and utilities. Here, children search through a slag heap outside a Berlin factory for valuable pieces of coal.





IN PICTURES THE BERLIN BLOCKADE

**"WE REFUSED TO BE
FORCED OUT OF THE
CITY OF BERLIN"**

US PRESIDENT HARRY S TRUMAN



MEET THE PEOPLE

MEET THE PEOPLE

HOME

HOME

COMING

COMING

CELEBRATION DAY

"Hurrah! We're still alive" reads the sign as Berliners celebrate the first buses to Hannover, reuniting West Berlin with the rest of the Western Allied-controlled Germany. After 11 months, the Soviets admit defeat and end the blockade of the city.

ALAMY X1, GETTY X2, PRESS ASSOCIATION X1

THE BLOCKADE IS OVER

On 12 May 1949, the supplies lines were reopened and the city rejoiced



OPEN BORDER

THE END IS IN SIGHT

By May 1949, the Soviets are forced to admit defeat, and reopen the border crossing to allow entry to Berlin.

WAVES OF JOY

FAMILY AND FRIENDS REUNITED

With the blockade over, the first bus departs on the interzone highway to Hannover.



BUSINESS AS USUAL

BUTCHER'S CHOICE

With the blockade over, Berlin's shopkeepers - such as this butcher - can replenish stocks.



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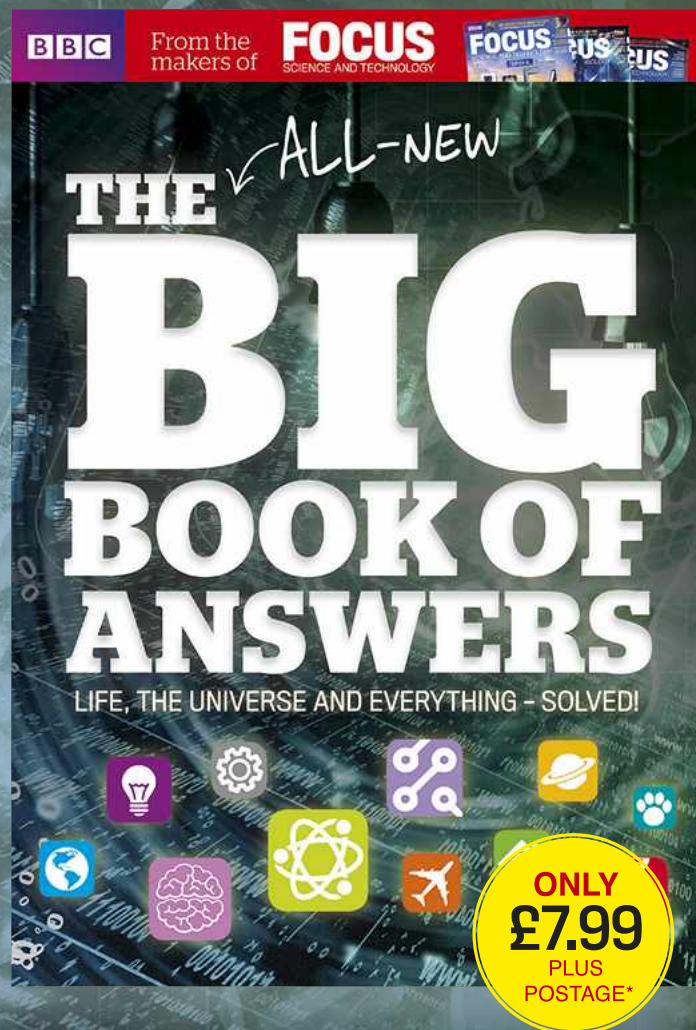
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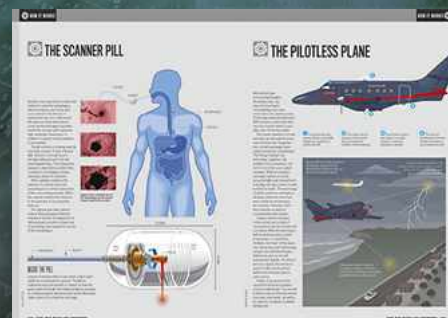
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Q&A

YOU ASK, WE ANSWER



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OUR EXPERTS

EMILY BRAND

Historian, genealogist and author of *Mr Darcy's Guide to Courtship* (2013)



JULIAN HUMPHRYS

Development Officer for The Battlefields Trust and author



GREG JENNER

Horrible Histories consultant and author of *A Million Years in a Day* (published 2015)



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DID YOU KNOW?

BLESSED RELIEFS

The earliest artistic depiction of the Nativity is probably a carving on an early fourth-century tomb in Milan, which shows the baby Jesus lying in a manger beside an ox and an ass. And so, thousands of school plays were launched.

THE FIRST NOËLS?

St Francis of Assisi encouraged the singing of Christmas songs in the 13th century

WHEN DID PEOPLE START CAROLLING?



The origins of the Christmas carol - such a prominent part of festive celebrations today - are unclear, though seasonal pagan ditties were sung thousands of years ago.

Nativity-themed songs appeared as early as the fifth century, though they did not take on a familiar form in England until the 14th century, when they were heard in Franciscan monasteries. The earliest

English 'Caroles of Cristemas', to be sung by roaming groups of 'wassailers' in and around taverns rather than recited door-to-door, were documented by Shropshire chaplain John Awdley in 1426. MR

350

Though 25 December was celebrated by Romans as the climax of the festival of Saturnalia, it wasn't officially designated as Christmas Day till AD 350.

How did ancient peoples celebrate winter festivals?

Most ancient civilisations held a festival celebrating the winter solstice – the point each year at which they were halfway through the darkest period and heading towards spring. Midwinter was marked by early societies including the Mesopotamians, Babylonians, Egyptians, Olmecs, Incas, Aztecs, Persians, Greeks and, of course, ancient Britons, who may have built Stonehenge and other megalithic structures for just such a purpose. The ancient winter festival that had the most influence upon our concept of Christmas was the Roman Saturnalia, a week of feasting, gift-giving and parties in which normal patterns of social behaviour were abandoned. The climax of festivities was the date of the winter solstice in the old Julian calendar: 25 December. MR

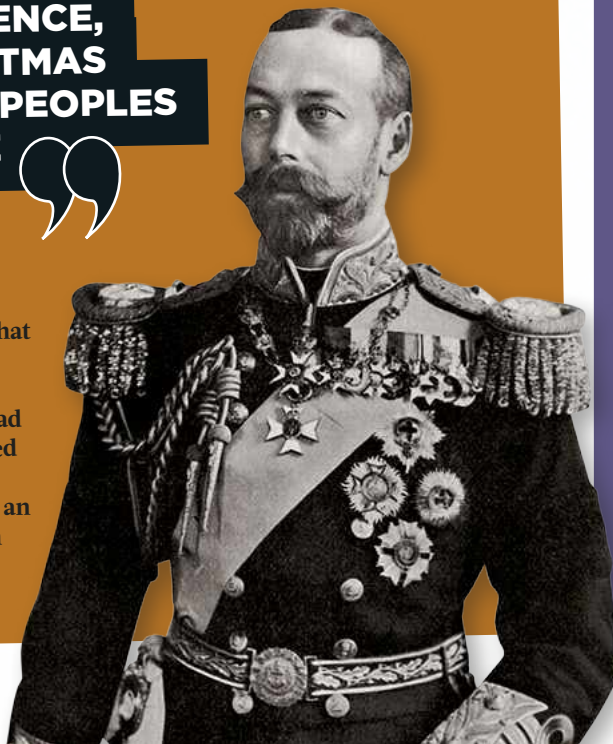


ROMAN HOLIDAY
The winter solstice was celebrated with lavish feasts during Saturnalia

“THROUGH ONE OF THE MARVELS OF MODERN SCIENCE, I AM ENABLED, THIS CHRISTMAS DAY, TO SPEAK TO ALL MY PEOPLES THROUGHOUT THE EMPIRE”

KING GEORGE V

When King George V broadcast the first-ever Christmas speech in 1932, his hands were shaking from nerves. He later admitted he was so anxious that the inaugural broadcast “quite ruined Christmas”. He was very reluctant to experiment with a radio message delivered across the British Empire – he had first declined to do it in 1923 – but he was persuaded after he was told famed novelist and poet Rudyard Kipling would write his speech. The broadcast was an instant success. Letters came by the sack load from around the Empire praising ‘Grandpa England’, as the King became known.



FOWL PLAY
By 1937, when this display of birds adorned a London market, turkeys were the nation's favourite

WHY DO WE EAT TURKEY AT CHRISTMAS?

Ever since medieval times, Christmas has provided a great excuse to push the gravy boat out. Swans, peacocks and boars' heads graced aristocrats' tables; more modest households made do with whatever seasonal fare they could find – chicken or goose, perhaps, or the odd pigeon. It's claimed that one William Strickland brought back the first six turkeys from the New World in 1526 during the reign

of Henry VIII. Before the introduction of the railways, Norfolk farmers would dip turkeys' feet in tar and sand to make 'wellies' for the walk to London, which could take up to two months. Like so many traditions, roasted turkey became synonymous with Christmas when immortalised by Charles Dickens. At the end of the classic *A Christmas Carol*, the humbled Scrooge sends a boy to buy the biggest turkey in the shop. But it wasn't until the 20th century that Hollywood movies popularised the dish in the UK, and prices fell thanks to new farming methods. SL

WHERE DID TOASTING 'YULE' ORIGINATE?

The Vikings celebrated midwinter with the 12-day festival of Jul or Jol, possibly connected with Norse god Odin, who was sometimes referred to as the 'Yule-father'. The association between Yule and Christmas probably dates from AD 960, when Haakon Haraldsson, King of Norway, tried to introduce Christianity to his people. Haakon aligned Jul with the Christian Feast of the Nativity, decreeing that both should be celebrated on 25 December. MR

IN A NUTSHELL WHO IS FATHER CHRISTMAS?

Santa, Kris Kringle, Sinterklaas – all created by mixing a pagan god with a Christian saint

Does Father Christmas exist?
Of course! Next question...

Who is he, then?

His first incarnation was as Nicholas, born in AD 270, who became Bishop of Myra in Asia Minor (today part of Turkey). Imprisoned by the pagan Roman Emperor Diocletian, he was freed by Constantine the Great and continued his saintly work. He died in AD 343, on 6 December – now St Nicholas Day.

Little is known of his life, but legends told after his death focus on the children, sailors and young women he helped. Nicholas's bones were stolen from Myra by Italian merchants and moved to Bari in 1087, and his reputation soon spread throughout Europe.

So how did the Vikings get involved with the story?

They believed that the god Odin flew over their houses on

his flying, eight-legged horse, Sleipnir, dropping bread for the hungry to enjoy in the cold midwinter at the feast of Jul (Odin was sometimes called the Yule-father). Clearly, they must have seen Father Christmas's flying reindeer and got confused.

When did the Yule-father become Father Christmas?

In early medieval England, the pagan Saxons honoured the Frost or Winter King, who had a lot in common with Odin. But, as Christianity became dominant, this figure became more closely associated with the festival celebrating the birth of Jesus. By the 1400s, he was thought of as a chivalric knight called Sir Christmas, and by the Tudor era he had been charmingly renamed Captain Christmas. Rather than giving gifts to children, though, his job was to make sure everyone

had fun at the lavish yuletide feasts. This made him an enemy of Oliver Cromwell's righteous government, which outlawed Christmas, fearing that it had become an excuse for unholy drunkenness. In response, the defenders of the tradition renamed the figure Old Father Christmas to make him sound more venerable. When the monarchy was restored and Charles II took the throne, Father Christmas kept his new name.

So who is Santa Claus?

The story of St Nicholas's miracles and his generosity to children spread throughout

medieval Europe, and in the Netherlands

he became known as Sinterklaas.

The Dutch believed that, like the Norse Odin, he travelled by flying horse, but also that black-faced assistants helped him choose the good children

who deserved to be rewarded with pressies on the evening before 6 December, his holy feast day.

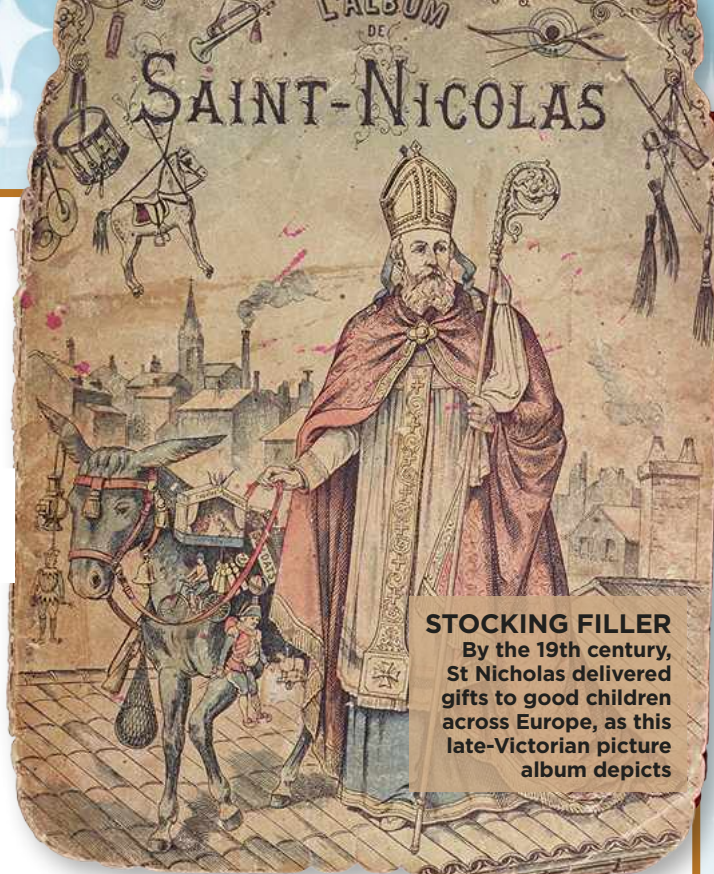
However, in the early 16th century, Martin Luther – the German founder of Protestantism

– considered Sinterklaas too similar to pagan Odin. Instead he decreed that it was the *Christkind* (an angelic Christ child) who brought gifts – though he visited on 25 December, not the 6th.

Many Dutch became Protestants and dispensed with Sinterklaas, yet the old tradition was carried to America by Dutch settlers. In New York, a former Dutch outpost, by the early 19th century Sinterklaas had morphed into Santa Claus, who would soon be immortalised by American poets and writers. Some confused the rival Christkind with St Nick, and he acquired the nickname Kris Kringle.

Are Father Christmas and Santa now one and the same?

By the middle of the 19th century, England's Father Christmas was more interested in the edification of children than drunken adult parties, and merged with the America idea of Santa. By the end of the century, he had become a jolly man with a big white beard who, boarding his reindeer-hauled flying sleigh, delivered gifts down the chimney on 25 December. He was also accepted by most Christians as a miraculous proxy for Jesus himself, though in 1951, a French priest burned an effigy of Le Père Noël in Dijon, claiming that he was drawing too much attention away from celebrations of the birth of Christ.



STOCKING FILLER
By the 19th century, St Nicholas delivered gifts to good children across Europe, as this late-Victorian picture album depicts

HORSING AROUND

Early incarnations of Santa Claus delivered gifts not from a reindeer-drawn sleigh but astride a flying horse



DID YOU KNOW?
THE FIRST NOELLE?
Mother Christmas (or, rather, Santa's wife) first appeared in the short story *A Christmas Legend* by priest James Rees, published in Philadelphia in 1849. Mrs Claus was specifically named a couple of years later in the *Yale Literary Magazine*.

WHY IS BOXING DAY SO-CALLED?

The day after Christmas, 26 December, has been called Boxing Day since at least the mid-17th century. Today, it is a public holiday for everyone but, until World War I, it primarily provided a day off for servants. Domestic staff would have

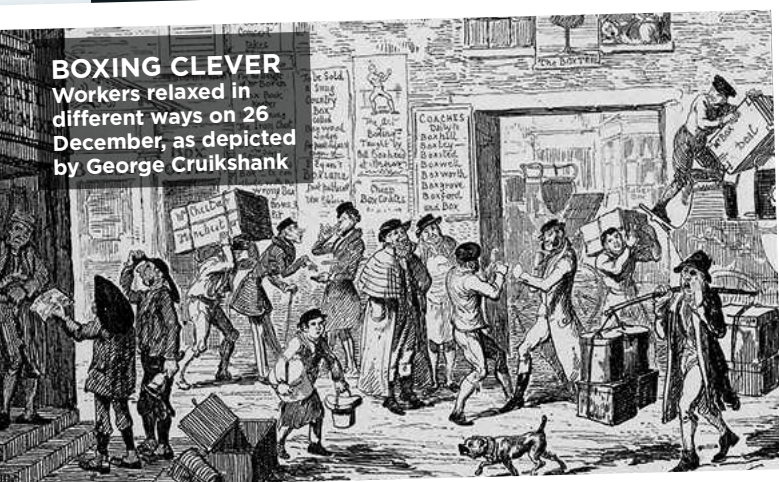
had to work long and hard on Christmas Day serving their employers; on Boxing Day they had the day off and their masters were expected to make do with cold leftovers. In 1871, Boxing Day became an official bank holiday in England and

Wales, though the Scots had to wait until 1974.

The origin of the term is unclear. There are three main theories, each of which is supported by some evidence, but none of it conclusive.

The first holds that the name comes from the custom of some employers to give servants a box containing gifts, food and drink to enjoy on their day off. The second theory is that the name came from the tradition in some parishes of opening the alms box, which had been placed by the church door throughout Advent to invite donations, and distributing the contents to the poor. And the third recalls that on the first weekday after Christmas, tradesmen carried boxes with them to solicit gifts of money from their customers. **RM**

BOXING CLEVER
Workers relaxed in different ways on 26 December, as depicted by George Cruikshank



DID YOU KNOW?

THE DATING GAME

In the mid-fourth century, 25 December was designated as Christmas Day – but why? Partly to override pagan festivities, but it's also exactly nine months after 25 March, observed by many as the date of Jesus's conception – the Annunciation.



DEEP AND CRISP AND EVEN
Good Wenceslas did indeed look out – though he wasn't a king at the time

WHO WAS GOOD KING WENCESLAS?

The popular carol tells the story of a king braving harsh winter weather to give alms to a peasant on the Feast of Stephen (26 December). The story is based on the life of Wenceslas I, Duke of Bohemia (now in the Czech Republic) from AD 921 till 935, when he was assassinated in a plot led by his own brother, Boleslav the Cruel. He was swiftly recognised as a saint and posthumously declared a king, and Prague's Wenceslas Square is named after him. The words to the carol were written by Anglican priest John Mason Neale and published in *Carols for Christmastide* in 1853. **JH**

WHAT'S THE BESTSELLING CHRISTMAS SONG OF ALL TIME?

According to the Official Charts Company, the biggest-selling Christmas song of all time is the original Band Aid charity single *Do They Know It's Christmas? The 1984 number one* has sold 3.75m copies in the UK to date. **SL**

CHRISTMAS CRACKER
Band Aid's Christmas single has just been re-recorded for the third time



When were mince pies first made?

Mincemeat was originally just that – minced meat, usually mutton or beef, cooked with fruit, peel and spices brought back by Crusaders during the Middle Ages. Some historians claim the three main spices (cinnamon, nutmeg and cloves) represent the Magi; others suggest that there were 13 ingredients, one each for Christ and his Apostles. 'Christmas pyes' took various shapes, usually in a pastry 'coffin' (box), and some had a little pastry 'baby' representing Jesus in the manger.

The addition of a generous slug of booze dates back to Victorian times. An 1888 recipe in *Mrs Beeton's Book of Household Management* recommends including half a pint of brandy. Cheers! **SL**

PIE EYED
The number of ingredients in mince pies may originally have echoed New Testament stories



Did Oliver Cromwell really ban Christmas?

It's true that on June 1647, Parliament passed an ordinance that abolished Christmas Day as a feast day and holiday. But though Cromwell certainly supported the move, as well as subsequent laws imposing penalties on those who continued to enjoy Christmas, he does not seem to have actually led the campaign.

Throughout the medieval period, Christmas Day had been marked by church services and magnificent feasts accompanied by heavy drinking. The subsequent 12 days of Christmas featured more special services, along with sports, games, and more eating and drinking. By the early 17th Century, Puritans and other devout Protestants saw Christmas jollifications as unwelcome relics of Catholicism, and excuses for sins.

There was a widespread view in Britain that Christmas

WHERE DO ADVENT CALENDARS COME FROM?

During the 19th Century, Protestant families in Germany would count down the period to Christ's birth by burning candles, lighting wreaths and marking doors with chalk. The first printed Advent calendar appeared in the *Neues Tagblatt Stuttgart* newspaper in 1904 (though a 1902 'Christmas clock' in a Hamburg bookshop claims precedence), but the first mass-produced version was made by Gerhard Lang in 1908. In 1946, President Eisenhower popularised calendars in America with Richard Selmer's *Little Town*, still available today. SL



The Vindication of
CHRISTMAS
OR,
His Twelve Yeares Observations upon the
Times, concerning the lamentable Game called Sweep-
stake; acted by General Plunder, and Major General Tax;
With his Exhortation to the people; a description of that
oppressing Ringworm called Excise; and the manner how
our high and mighty Christmas-Ale that formerly would
knock down Hercules, & trip up the heels of a Giant, strook
into a deep Consumption with a blow from Westminster.



Printed at London for G. Horton, 1653.

CHRISTMAS JEER

The abolishment of Christmas by the Puritan Parliament was lamented by the masses, as this pamphlet shows

should be a fast day devoted to sober religious contemplation. When more zealous Protestants gained power after the Civil War, Parliament passed legislation to ensure piety – but it was deeply unpopular and enforced only sporadically. On the restoration of

Charles II to power in 1660, one of his first acts as King was to repeal anti-Christmas legislation, helping to foster his image as the 'Merry Monarch'.

RM

1.7bn

Christmas cards are sent in the UK each year, a big jump from 1843 when the first printed cards were sold – just 2,050 of them



SNOW BLIGHT
Georgian theatre managers loathed panto – but loved the profits

WHAT ARE THE ORIGINS OF THE CHRISTMAS PANTOMIME?

The peculiarly English-born Christmas pantomime has its beginnings in the 18th century. In the 1720s, entertainments heavily influenced by the Italian *commedia dell'arte* became increasingly popular thanks to their crowd-pleasing mix of humour, mime, spectacle and dance. Disliking the genre but unwilling to forego the profits, in the 1750s actor and theatre manager David Garrick limited pantomime performances in Drury Lane to the festive season. By the early 19th century, these 'grotesque performances' were a well-established part of Christmas. The Victorian era saw harlequinade characters replaced by the cross-dressing dame and principal boy, and Italian-inspired tales supplanted by English folklore, but the association with Christmas remains as strong as ever (oh, yes it does!) EB

WHAT IS IT?

This scrap of cloth is one of the most unusual Christmas 'cards' to have been posted – by a soldier fighting in the Second Boer War (1899–1902). Apparently torn from the soldier's coat, the fabric bears a touching poem, addressed to 'Alice':
"A piece of kahki/ All tattered & torn/
Cut from a coat a/ Soldier has worn
It is not an expensive/-E or gilt edged card
Still it contains my/ Best wishes & kindest –
A Merry Xmas/ From Sam"

It was common for British troops in the Boer War to write on whatever material they could lay hands on. This 'card' was donated to Perth's Black Watch Castle & Museum, Scotland, in 1967, by the son of the poetic soldier. theblackwatch.co.uk/index/castle-museum

SEASON'S SHEETINGS
Not all Christmas 'cards' were card – soldiers sent messages on whatever they could find



WHY DO WE SAY...

BAH, HUMBUG!



When the sleigh bells ring, the halls are decked and the goose is getting fat, there are always the Christmas curmudgeons who reject the merriment of the festive season and come together under the joyless slogan: 'bah, humbug!' It's nothing to do with the black-and-white hard boiled sweets, but thanks to the misanthropic anti-hero of Charles Dickens' *A Christmas Carol*, Ebenezer Scrooge.

The phrase is often misunderstood. When Scrooge decries Christmas as a 'humbug', it is often taken as a general exclamation of displeasure and bitterness, but Scrooge didn't just hate Christmas – at the start of the tale, at least – he deemed it to be a complete fraud.

Although associated forevermore with anti-Christmas cheer, the word 'humbug' was in common parlance long before Dickens wrote his festive novella in 1843, and was meant as a hoax or deceit. (In fact, it was described in 1751 as "a word very much in vogue with the people of taste and fashion".)

When, in 1846, renowned American surgeon John Collins Warren performed the first operation using ether as anaesthesia, he was observed by a stunned audience of medical professionals and students. After the successful surgery, Dr Warren announced to his sceptical spectators: "Gentlemen, this is no humbug!" JW

DID YOU KNOW?

GLITZ AND PIECES

The tradition of hanging tinsel – from the Old French *estincelle*, 'sparkle' – is thought to have originated in 17th-century Germany, where strands of gold and silver were used as decorations to reflect the light of flickering candles.

ALL THE BERRY BEST
Does the tradition of kissing under the mistletoe stem from a Norse myth?



Why do we kiss under the mistletoe?

Among the various theories about the origins of this tradition are that it is a hangover from the Roman Saturnalia celebrations (a major influence on our concept of Christmas) or a relic of the wintertide fertility rituals practised by the druids.

Perhaps the most charming idea is that it derives from a Norse myth of Frigg, goddess of love, and her ill-fated son Balder. He was so beloved that all things on Earth – including animals, elements

and plants – took an oath never to harm him. Envious of Balder's invincibility, the mischievous god Loki sought the one thing that had been overlooked – the tiny mistletoe – and made a dart of the plant, contriving to have it thrown at Balder to deadly effect. Devastated, Frigg declared mistletoe a symbol of peace and love, promising to kiss any who walked under it in remembrance of her son.

Whatever the true beginnings of the tradition, kissing under the mistletoe was an established Christmas custom by the early 19th century. In his short sketch *Christmas Eve* (1820), Washington Irving described "the mistletoe, with its white berries, hung up, to the imminent peril of all the pretty housemaids". EB

GETTING THE SACK

The post office in the small town of Santa Claus, Indiana, is inundated with children's letters each year



WHAT DOES INDIANA, USA, HAVE TO DO WITH LETTERS TO SANTA?

In the 1850s, a small new town in Indiana was having trouble deciding on a name for the settlement. The townsfolk were huddled in church on Christmas Eve, arguing over names, when a gust of wind blew open the doors. Hearing

the distant jangle of sleighbells, the children yelled: "it must be Santa Claus!" And so the town had its name. An unexpected outcome of this decision was that the post office soon began receiving children's letters addressed to Santa Claus. In 1914, the town's postmaster began writing back! CJ

HOW DID THE CHRISTMAS ISLANDS GET THEIR NAME?

Anyone planning a journey to Christmas Island would be advised to make sure they know which Christmas Island they want to visit. There are a lot of them! As well as uninhabited specks off Tasmania, Jamaica, Myanmar, Florida and Alaska, there are three inhabited Christmas Islands. One off Nova Scotia seems to have been named after a local resident, while the other two were discovered at Christmas. The best known is an Australian territory in the Indian Ocean about 200 miles south of Java, named by Captain William Mynors, who sailed past it on Christmas Day 1643. The other was discovered and named by Captain James Cook on Christmas Eve 1777, during his third Pacific voyage. Part of Kiribati, it's now called Kiritimati, a respelling of Christmas in the local language. This Christmas Island is remembered for a rather uncheery reason – it was used by the British in the late 1950s as a base for nuclear testing. JH



GOD BLESS US, EVERYONE!
Dickens' tale featuring Tiny Tim may be the best known – but it wasn't the first Christmas book

Did Charles Dickens write the **first** Christmas book?

Though *A Christmas Carol* (1843) was a pioneering novella, even then seasonal writing was nothing new. As early as 1823, Clement Clarke Moore's American poem *A Visit From St Nicholas* had fired the popular imagination with its opening line: "Twas the night before Christmas..." In Britain, Thomas Hervey's *The Book of Christmas* (1836) also made a splash, recounting the long history of festive customs, beautifully illustrated with artwork by Robert Seymour – whose final commission was illustrating Dickens' debut, *The Pickwick Papers*.

Hervey's nostalgic quest for the festival's origins were part of a Victorian obsession with medieval folklore, and his book was complemented by two collections of ancient carols compiled by Davies Gilbert and William Sandy. It was this trio of non-fiction texts that prepared the ground for Charles Dickens' memorable tale of Scrooge's rehabilitation from the sin of miserly capitalism.

Ironically, Dickens himself was upset that he didn't make more money from the book, and some critics pointed out that the binding was too lavish for poorer readers to afford. But no-one doubted the emotional heft of Tiny Tim's festive cheer, and *A Christmas Carol* became a definitive roadmap to what became the ethos of the classic Victorian festival. Dickens, pleased with the critical acclaim, wrote several other short stories set at Christmas, but none matched his original. GJ

1857

The year in which James Lord Pierpont wrote the classic ditty *Jingle Bells* – though in fact he penned it to celebrate American Thanksgiving, not Christmas.

WHEN AND WHY DID WE START SENDING CHRISTMAS CARDS?

The introduction of the Penny Black stamp in 1840 caused an explosion in letter writing and posting, making it cheaper and easier, and also helped launch the Christmas card. The first design, commissioned by Henry Cole in 1843, depicted a family feasting together – a motif that would remain popular. But surprising research reveals that many cards depicted spring imagery, rather than the expected robins and snowmen. This may have been an extension of the Valentine tradition for courting couples – the card functioned as a written invitation to kiss under the mistletoe. Or perhaps the flowers and greenery represented a nostalgic reaction to the urban grime of the Industrial Revolution. In any case, Christmas cards became hugely popular, and bonded far-flung families stretched across the British Empire. GJ



NOW SEND US YOUR QUESTIONS

Wondering about a particular historical happening? Don't rack your brains – our expert panel has the answer, so get in touch



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THE MONTGOMERY BUS BOYCOTT WALKING TO FREEDOM

When Rosa Parks refused to give up her seat on the local bus to a white man, she initiated a chain of events that would change the course of American history, as **Dan Cossins** explains

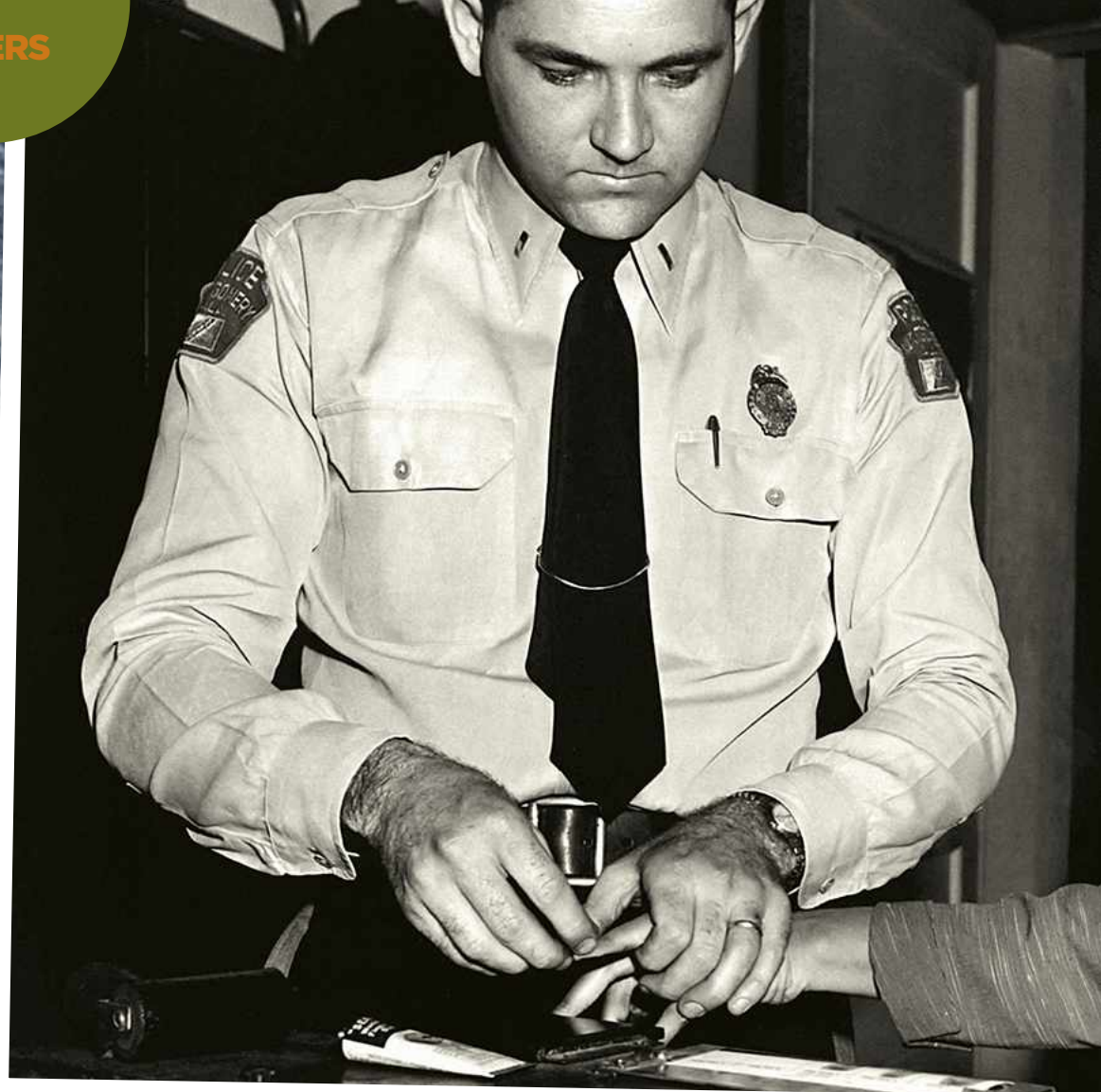


ON THE BUS
Rosa Parks sits at the
front of a bus after
the historic boycott



MAY 1954 WARNING SIGNS

Jo Ann Robinson, a professor at Alabama State College, writes to the mayor of Montgomery to inform him of plans for a bus boycott. In March 1955, Claudette Colvin (above) refuses to give up her seat on the bus to a white person, for which she is arrested.



The evening of Thursday 1 December 1955 saw Rosa Park finish her day's work as a seamstress at a department store in downtown Montgomery, Alabama, and walk to the bus stop. As an African American, Parks had to abide by strict rules of racial segregation, known as 'Jim Crow' laws, enforced throughout the American South. On city buses, the first 10 rows of seats were reserved for whites no matter how crowded the bus might be. And drivers had the power to order blacks sitting toward the back of the bus to give up their seats for whites.

Parks, a well-educated 42-year-old woman, boarded the bus and sat down just behind the whites-only section. She watched as the vehicle filled up until no more seats were available.

When a white man then boarded and stood in the aisle, the driver demanded that all four black passengers in her row give up their seats. Reluctantly, three of them did as they were told. But Parks did not move. It wasn't because she was tired, she later recalled, but because she "was tired of giving in". Having watched blacks suffer daily indignities on Montgomery's

buses for years, Parks had made up her mind long before that evening: if she was asked again to relinquish her seat for a white person, she would refuse. She was arrested and charged with violating segregation laws.

It wasn't the first time a black passenger had suffered such a fate. But this time the incident

be achieved in the courts – it was the first time southern blacks had mobilized en masse effectively to fight Jim Crow laws. Indeed, by providing the blueprint for non-violent action across the South, and placing a charismatic young preacher called Dr Martin Luther King Jr in the national spotlight, the Montgomery Bus Boycott gave rise to the African-American Civil Rights movement.

"I was not tired physically, or no more tired than I usually was at the end of a working day... No, the only tired I was, was tired of giving in."

Rosa Parks

triggered a vigorous response from black leaders, who called for a one-day bus boycott to demand better treatment. They didn't know it at the time, but the Montgomery Bus Boycott would last 381 days and start a new chapter in the struggle for black equality in the United States. Although the boycott did not directly bring about desegregation – that could only

TAKING A STAND

Montgomery's black citizens had been growing increasingly angry about their treatment on the city's buses for years. It wasn't just segregated seating. Black passengers often suffered verbal abuse and physical threats. In 1949, for example, Jo Ann Robinson, a teacher who had recently joined the local Women's Political Council, stumbled off the bus in tears after the driver had

drawn his arm back as if to strike her for sitting in the whites-only section.

In 1953, Robinson was among black leaders who met with city officials to demand better seating arrangements and treatment. As a result, the mayor instructed the bus company to stop at every corner in black neighbourhoods. But that was the only concession. A year later, the



1 DECEMBER 1955 UNDER ARREST

Rosa Parks, a 42-year-old seamstress and Civil Rights activist, is arrested for refusing to give up her seat on a city bus to a white man. The incident spurs black leaders to instigate long-held plans for a citywide bus boycott.

US Supreme Court ruled that segregation in the nation's public schools was unconstitutional. The decision had no bearing on the bus situation, but it moved Robinson to write to Montgomery's white mayor, William "Tacky" Gayle. For the first time, she mentioned the possibility of a bus boycott.

Meanwhile, several black riders had been convicted for sitting in seats reserved for whites. In March 1955, 15-year-old Claudette Colvin refused to give up her seat in the black section even when police arrived. Colvin was dragged from the bus kicking and screaming, and charged not only with violating segregation laws, but also assault and battery for resisting arrest.

Edgar D Nixon, founder of the local chapter of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP), and Fred Gray, one of two black lawyers in the city, had been waiting for an opportunity to take the issue of bus segregation to federal court. They hoped to show that segregated buses were illegal under the US constitution. But they needed an ideal test case – someone who could withstand intense scrutiny. They considered Colvin but decided she was too young and too unpredictable. Two months later, Nixon and Gray found the perfect standard bearer when Rosa Parks, a softly spoken woman who was already involved in Civil Rights work, was arrested.

TEST CASE

Rosa Parks' arrest provided two black lawyers in Montgomery with the case they had been waiting for to challenge the law

Parks agreed to fight the charges, even though she knew it might put her family in danger. That same night, across the city, Jo Ann Robinson and friends were printing thousands of leaflets calling on the black community to stage a one-day bus boycott the following Monday, the day of Parks's trial. Over the weekend, black preachers called on their congregations to support the protest.

Still, it was a big ask. Most African-Americans could not afford a car, so how would they get to work? Even worse, they would face intimidation and violence. This was the land of the Ku Klux Klan, who thought nothing of terrorizing, beating or even murdering blacks who dared challenge segregation.

The black citizens of Montgomery were ready, though. And on Monday 5 December 1955, the city's buses were empty but for a few white passengers. The boycott had begun.

"MY SOUL IS RESTED"

Parks was found guilty and Gray filed an appeal. That afternoon, the city's black leaders formed the Montgomery Improvement Association



Following Parks' arrest, the black community turned out in protest

5 DECEMBER 1955 KING'S SPEECH

On the day of Parks' trial, Montgomery's black citizens stay off the buses. The boycott is a success. At a protest rally in the evening, Martin Luther King energizes a huge crowd at the Holt Street Baptist Church with a momentous speech. The black community rises as one to vote to continue the boycott.

(MIA) to plan for a longer boycott and elected newcomer Martin Luther King Jr as its leader. King, a 26-year-old preacher from Atlanta, Georgia, was known to be a powerful speaker. In the evening, he arrived at the Holt Street Baptist Church for a mass protest rally to deliver a speech laying out his vision for non-violent resistance.

Speaking in a resonant voice, his words rolling out in the captivating cadence characteristic of southern Baptist preachers, King had his audience in raptures: "If you will protest courageously, and yet with dignity and Christian love, when the history books are written in future generations, the historians will have to pause and say, 'There lived a great people – a black people – who injected new meaning and dignity into the veins of civilization.'" The crowd erupted into cheers at every pause, and the church shook with the stomping of feet. Later, every person present voted to continue the boycott.

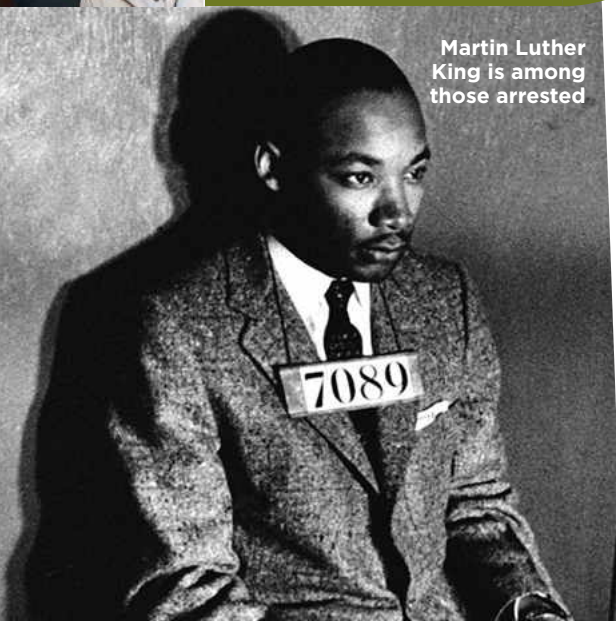
If it were to succeed in the long term, however, its leaders had to organize an alternative transport system. So the MIA set up a car pool. Black car owners volunteered and the MIA's transport committee set up a network of pick-up and drop-off points. As the protest

MARTIN LUTHER KING, CIVIL RIGHTS LEADER
"The story of Montgomery is the story of 50,000 Negroes... who are willing to substitute tired feet for tired souls, and walk and walk until the walls of injustice are crushed by the battering rams of historical necessity."





THE HISTORY MAKERS ROSA PARKS



Martin Luther King is among those arrested



Local churches helped supply the car pool that operated during the bus boycott

21 FEBRUARY 1956 MASS INDICTMENT

A Montgomery County grand jury indicts 115 boycott leaders, charging them with violating an obscure state statute that forbids boycotts "without just cause or legal excuse". Boycott leaders are greeted by cheering crowds as they arrive at the county jail to hand themselves in.

5 JUNE 1956 EQUAL PROTECTION

A three-judge federal court panel rules that city and state bus laws violate the 14th Amendment to the US Constitution, which guarantees equal protection under the law. Park's case had been thrown out on a technicality, so lawyer Fred Gray had filed a new lawsuit to challenge bus segregation, this time on behalf of five women who had been discriminated against on Montgomery's buses.

became a national story and money began to pour in from sympathizers, the MIA acquired a fleet of station wagons. The system was run with military efficiency. Hundreds of cars transported thousands of passengers, while thousands more took to the streets and walked.

Mass meetings were held every Monday and Thursday at black churches to keep everyone informed and morale high. Speakers praised individual walkers, making heroes of ordinary people, and emphasized unity. When an elderly woman known as Mother Pollard was told she could drop out of the boycott, she insisted she would walk on. "My feet is tired but my soul is rested," she said.

Black leaders met with white officials. Their demands were modest – courteous treatment, black drivers for black neighbourhoods, and first-come first-serve seating by race, with blacks seated from the back of the bus and whites from the front until all seats were taken. Blacks would no longer have to give up their seats for whites or stand over empty seats.

But white officials wouldn't budge.

The boycott wore on. Thousands of ordinary black citizens – maids, nurses, cooks, labourers, store workers, teachers, students and others – showed their determination by willingly accepting daily sacrifices. They would not be discouraged, even when Mayor Gayle announced a get-tough policy. The police cracked down on black drivers and harassed people at pick-up points. But the boycott held.

Then came the threats and intimidation. At the end of January, a bomb exploded in King's house. Fortunately, no one was harmed and King, addressing the crowd from his splintered porch, continued to urge non-violence.

The most comprehensive official action came in February, when a grand jury indicted 115 blacks, including King and Nixon, under an obscure state law prohibiting boycotts "without

just cause". The boycotters didn't wait to be arrested. Instead, they handed themselves in at the county jail, where they were cheered by crowds of African-Americans; to be arrested for the cause had become a badge of honour.

Parks' appeal was thrown out on a technicality, but Gray had filed papers in a federal court challenging bus segregation on behalf of five women. Then, in June, the boycotters won their first legal victory: a three-judge federal court ruled that Alabama's state and local laws requiring segregation on buses violated the 14th Amendment to the Constitution, which guarantees equal protection under law. While the ruling was under appeal, though, the laws remained in force.

ROAD TO FREEDOM

Still the boycott went on, as did whites' attempts to cripple it. Come autumn, the White Citizens Council asked the state's

FRED GRAY, CIVIL RIGHTS ATTORNEY
"There was an electricity in the air. Such a feeling of unity, success and enthusiasm had never been before in the city of Montgomery... The people were together."



17 DECEMBER 1956 SUPREME TRIUMPH

The US Supreme Court upholds the lower court's decision, striking down Alabama's bus-segregation laws. The ruling takes effect three days later. Finally, after a boycott that lasted 381 days, Montgomery's black citizens can ride desegregated buses.

courts to ban the car pool as an unlicensed transport system. In November, King was at the hearing awaiting bad news when he was handed a bulletin from the Associated Press. The Supreme Court had declared Alabama's bus segregation laws unconstitutional. The boycott was, effectively, over. Almost a year after Parks' arrest, Montgomery's black citizens had achieved a remarkable victory.

On 20 December, Montgomery city officials received the Supreme Court's bus integration order. That evening, King gave a rousing speech at the Holt Street Baptist Church. His voice and the sounds of freedom songs were carried into the streets by loudspeakers stationed outside the church. The next morning, King, Nixon and other boycott leaders boarded a bus and took a seat at the front.

The boycott was an inspiration. Civil Rights activists across the South launched non-violent protests against segregation on buses and trains, as well as all kinds of other public facilities.

“Thousands of ordinary black citizens willingly accepted daily sacrifices”

Thousands marched in support of black equality. In response, police suppressed protesters by attacking them with vicious German shepherds, bullwhips and powerful fire hoses. Protestors were slammed into walls, beaten up and, in some instances, killed.

Many years of protest and resistance followed. Eventually, the stark contrast between the

peaceful protestors and the ugly violence they were subjected to created pressure to pass meaningful Civil Rights legislation. Finally, in 1964, Congress passed the Civil Rights Act outlawing racial discrimination in public facilities and employment. The Jim Crow laws were abolished. A year later, African-Americans were guaranteed the right to vote by the Voting Rights Act.

These landmark victories can be traced back to the streets and churches of Montgomery, Alabama, where thousands of ordinary people whose names are lost to history invigorated the struggle for freedom by refusing to ride the bus. 📍

MONTGOMERY TO DC



CIVIL RIGHTS

Montgomery to Washington DC

After Rosa Parks' bravery, the challenging road to the Civil Rights Act takes a further ten years before reaching the office of the President

WE SHALL OVERCOME A DECADE OF THE MOVEMENT

Black Americans had fought for equality and against racism for years – the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People was formed way back in 1909. But it isn't until the 1950s, under the leadership of men such as Martin Luther King, that the Civil Rights Movement makes major strides towards getting the laws concerning the rights of black Americans changed once and for all.

1955 1956

BUS BOYCOTT

In the aftermath of Rosa Parks' arrest, the black community of Montgomery, Alabama, launches a boycott of the town's buses. A leader of the boycott is Martin Luther King.

INTEGRATION

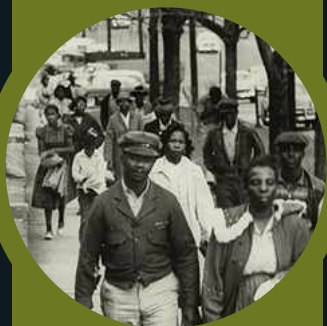
In 1954, The US Supreme Court makes their *Brown v Board of Education of Topeka* decision, declaring segregation of schools to be unconstitutional. Following this, a policy of 'Massive Resistance' attempts to prevent successful integration.

EMMETT TILL

When black teenager Emmett Till flirts with a white woman, her husband and his friends kidnap and beat him, then shoot Till dead.

UNDER ATTACK

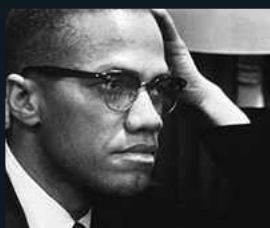
Court cases initiated by ten states aim to reduce the influence of the Civil Rights organisation, the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People.



BOYCOTT ENDS

▲ Over a year after the mass-scale Montgomery Bus Boycott began, the laws are changed to integrate the bus system in Alabama.

1957



MALCOLM X

▲ Activist and minister of the Nation of Islam, Malcolm X gains his first national coverage when he leads a large demonstration outside a Harlem police station in April in retaliation to a police beating of a black Muslim man.

THE SCLC

Having emerged as a leader of the national movement, King helps in the establishment of the Southern Christian Leadership Conference, and is chosen to stand as its first President.

LITTLE ROCK

On the orders of Arkansas Governor Orval Faubus, nine black students are blocked from entering Little Rock High School. Federal troops escort them into the building.

ACT PASSED

The first Civil Rights law since 1875 is passed, ensuring the rights of black Americans to vote.

1958

WWORLD TOUR

▼ After getting his passport restored from the American government, singer, actor and Civil Rights activist Paul Robeson starts a world tour, including a stop in Moscow and St Paul's Cathedral, London – in 1959, he becomes the first black performer to sing there.



LANDMARK

One way the Civil Rights Movement is able to get results is through the Supreme Court. The 1958 *Cooper v Aaron* case holds that states are bound to federal law. This makes it much harder for states to oppose desegregation.

TO THE SKIES

Ruth Carol Taylor becomes the first black American ever hired as a flight attendant. Only six months later, though, Mohawk Airlines lets her go – as they don't employ married women.

1959

INVESTIGATIVE JOURNALISM

White journalist John Howard Griffin undergoes a course of drugs to darken his skin so he can travel through the Deep South and experience the treatment received by black Americans.

MOTOWN

Under Berry Gordy Jr, record company Motown is founded. Its style of R&B music becomes wildly popular with white and black people alike, which assists in racial integration in America.

PEACEFUL PROTEST

The Congress of Racial Equality (CORE) organises workshops focussing on non-violent direct action.

INDIA TRIP

▼ King, with his wife Coretta Scott, visits India and speaks to huge groups of Mahatma Gandhi's followers on the merits of non-violence.





BRUTALITY IN BIRMINGHAM

The year before the Civil Rights Act, firemen are ordered to turn their hoses on protestors in Alabama



HOPE IN WASHINGTON

Thousands of black men and women march for equality with the whites

1960



KENNEDY

▲ Thanks in part to vital support from black voters, the 1960 Presidential election sees John F Kennedy defeat Richard Nixon. JFK promises to do more for black communities and work with Civil Rights leaders.

SIT-INS

On 1 February, four students stage a sit-in against the Woolworth's store in Greensboro, North Carolina, and its policy of not serving black customers. The form of protest spreads quickly and hundreds are arrested as dozens of sit-ins are held.

STUDENT ACTION

At a meeting held by activist Ella Baker at Shaw University, North Carolina, the Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee is founded, giving young black Americans their first taste of the Civil Rights Movement. As the group grows, they become more radical.

1961

UNIVERSITIES

Federal district court orders the University of Georgia to admit black students Hamilton Holmes and Charlayne Hunter. The two are suspended following a riot on campus.



FREEDOM RIDES

▲ To test whether public transport was integrated, around 1,000 'freedom riders' – both black and white – ride interstate buses, facing angry mobs and frequent aggression. In Birmingham, Alabama, Ku Klux Klan members severely beat a group of freedom riders.

ALBANY

A large desegregation campaign is organised in Albany, Georgia. Voter registration drives and petitions are carried out but – despite the thousands of supporters, King's involvement and widespread coverage in newspapers – the movement eventually ends in failure.

1962

BATON ROUGE

With the help of CORE, students in Baton Rouge, Louisiana, protest the ongoing, and sometimes violent, segregation evident in the town. When leaders are arrested or expelled from school, over 1,000 infuriated students turn out in response.

ENROLLING

So that Air Force veteran and activist James Meredith can enrol at the University of Mississippi – and become its first black student – JFK sends thousands of federal troops to repel riots.

AMENDMENT

Congress submits the 24th Amendment, concerning voting rights, for ratification.

1963

WATER HOSES

During peaceful protests in Birmingham, water hoses and police dogs are used to disperse demonstrators. The images cause outrage around the world.

WASHINGTON MARCH

▼ Around 200,000 people march on the nation's capital. During the day, King delivers his iconic "I Have A Dream" speech.



1964

FREEDOM SUMMER

In the summer of 1964, volunteers and activists, many of them white, travel to Mississippi in order to register as many black voters as possible, as well as setting up 'Freedom Schools' and 'Freedom Houses' to help the poor black areas.

NOBEL PRIZE

King is awarded the Nobel Peace Prize. In his speech, he describes the Civil Rights Movement as: "Moving with determination and a majestic scorn for risk and danger to establish a reign of freedom and a rule of justice".

FREE AT LAST THE CIVIL RIGHTS ACT

► Getting the bill through Congress involves considerable difficulties, including 54 days of filibustering by segregationist members of the Senate. But on 2 July 1964, the Civil Rights Act is signed by President Lyndon B Johnson, banning any and all discrimination on race, colour, religion, sex or national origin. It is a historic moment in American history, but strained tensions between black and white communities continue through subsequent years. The Civil Rights Movement still has plenty to do.



Worst jobs in history

We all like to have a moan about work, but consider yourself lucky. As **Emily Brand** reveals, our ancestors endured some truly horrific tasks...

BRAIN DRAIN

In Ancient Egypt, embalming corpses – such as this mummy now in the Louvre – involved hooking out the brain through the nose

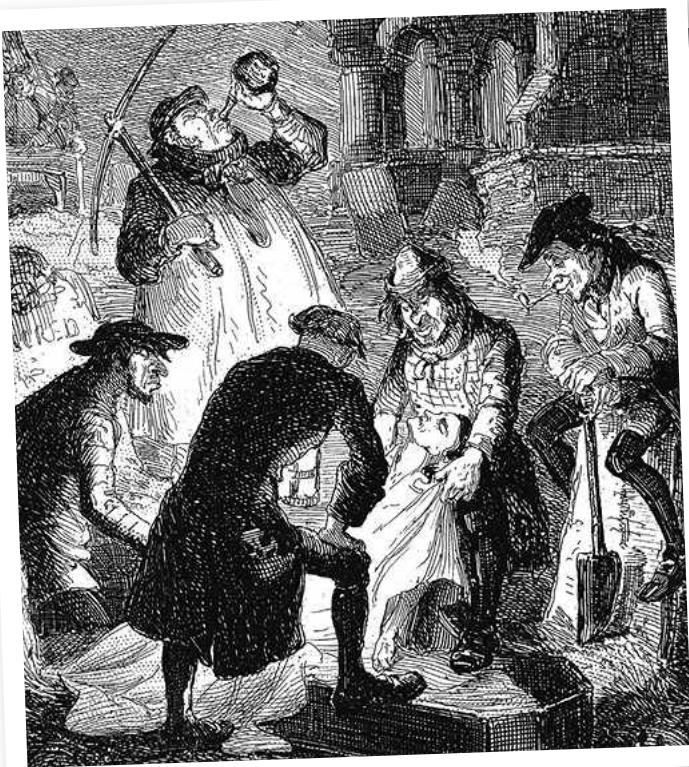


The Groom of the Stool did actually look after a piece of furniture called a close-stool – a boxed commode. This 17th-century stool was used by Charles I and II



GROOM OF THE STOOL

To be appointed Groom of the Stool was one of the highest honours at the Tudor court. It was a role that signified great trust and allowed peculiarly intimate access to the monarch. Unfortunately, part of the job description was less appealing: to assist the king with his bodily functions and washing. Essentially, he was a royal bottom-wiper.



RESURRECTIONIST

Body-snatching was a pursuit of early-modern anatomy students – including Vesalius, the 16th-century ‘father of modern anatomy’. By the 1800s, ‘resurrectionists’ were being paid to supply fresh corpses for medical study; a set of teeth alone was worth £1 (around £50 today). They often tunnelled into the grave from a short distance away to avoid disturbing the ground, then dragged out the body with a rope.

ROMAN FULLER

Doing the laundry has always been tedious, but in Ancient Rome it was plain disgusting. Charged with keeping togas and tunics clean and white, the fuller soaked them in a mixture of hot human urine and water before trampling out the stains. The ammonia in urine helped with cleaning, and pots were left outside shops and public urinals to collect the necessary outpourings.

WEE HAPPY FEW
A fresco in Pompeii shows fullers at work





EGYPTIAN MUMMIFIER

Ancient Egyptian priests preparing the dead for the afterlife spent much of their time with corpses. Shortly after death they removed and washed the internal organs of the cadaver, and destroyed the brain by poking a hook up the nose and pulling out the remains – no wonder each body took weeks to prepare. To add insult to injury, many mummifiers were ostracised from their local communities.



ROYAL PAIN IN THE BACKSIDE
William Murray was whipping boy to Charles I – and was later made 1st Earl of Dysart

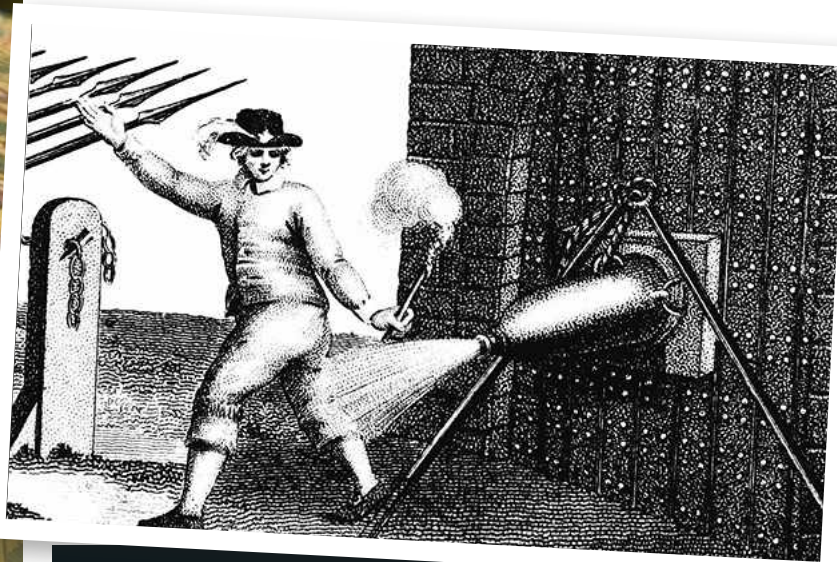


WHIPPING BOY

In early modern England, a royal prince was often assigned a 'whipping boy'. Educated together, the two would forge a strong bond. Why? It was believed that the only person who could punish a king's son was the king – so tutors could enforce rules only by physically punishing this unfortunate boy instead for the prince's misdemeanours.

VICTORIAN SEWER-HUNTER

Sewer-hunters, or 'toshers', made money by sifting through London's sewerage networks for coins, nails, bolts or rope to sell. Armed with a stick, a lantern and large pockets, each of these scavengers risked 'foul air', being trapped by high tides, being buried alive by crumbling brickwork – or being attacked by the ferocious race of wild hogs that reputedly ran amok in the sewers near Hampstead.



PETARDIER'S ASSISTANT

In early modern warfare – notably during the Civil War – this poor fellow was charged with attaching primitive explosive devices ('petards') to enemy targets, lighting the fuse and, preferably, running to safety. Unsurprisingly, the petardier's assistant was often killed by premature detonation – "hoist by his own petard".



BARBER SURGEON

In medieval Europe, barbers were tasked with most surgical procedures, which were deemed by physicians to be gruesome and demeaning. As well as trimming beards they performed amputations, enemas, blood-letting (draining blood, sometimes in pints at a time) and tooth-pulling – and all without modern anaesthetic.



LEECH COLLECTOR

Until the 19th century, these squirming blood-suckers were a staple of Western medicine. A leech collector would catch dozens each day by wading bare-legged for hours in leech-infested marshes. Traditionally a female job, workers often suffered dangerous blood-loss and infections.

FOOD TASTER

For millennia the powerful and the paranoid have feared poisoning. Those hired to test their meals lived in constant fear of death – perhaps none more so that the 15 young women employed by Adolf Hitler. Living in his 'Wolf's Lair', they wept after every meal because "we were so glad to have survived".



WHAT DO YOU THINK?

Can you think of more unpleasant jobs people did in days gone by? Get in touch and let us know what they did, when and why...

Email: editor@historyrevealed.com

**STORM AFTER
THE CALM**

Some 11 allied ships escape at the end of the battle, but in the **powerful storm** that blows up shortly afterwards, several French and Spanish vessels are wrecked or further damaged.

Trafalgar: Nelson's last great victory

Admiral Nelson's crushing defeat of the French and Spanish navies at Trafalgar in 1805 would establish Britain as the dominant world naval power for the next century. **Julian Humphrys** tells the story of Nelson's victory – and his death

The battle plan that Nelson had formulated for Trafalgar was a simple one – but it came at the end of a long and complicated campaign.

In May 1803, the brief Peace of Amiens between Britain and France had ended and the two nations were once again at war. Napoleon, who had been crowned Emperor of the French in December 1804, decided to invade England and assembled a large army on the French coast around Boulogne. His plan was to ferry his troops across the English

PYRRHIC VICTORY

Only the foremasts remain standing on Nelson's flagship – but her **104 guns have performed their work** well, battering the French 74-gun *Redoutable* and Villeneuve's flagship *Bucentaure*.

THEY THINK IT'S ALL OVER...

At about 5pm, after five hours of fighting, it's clear – as this 1808 painting by Nicholas Pocock shows – that the British fleet has demolished the French and Spanish contingents

SHIPS OF THE LINE

Some 60 vessels known as ships of the line fight in the battle. This was a type of warship constructed from the 17th century to work with the prevailing strategy of **advancing in lines of battle** to fire barrages of broadsides.

FIGHTING TEMERAIRE

Two captured French vessels, the *Fougueux* and the *Redoutable*, flank their captor – the British 98-gun ship **Temeraire**, immortalised in JMW Turner's renowned painting depicting her being towed to be broken up in 1838.

BATTLE CONTEXT

WHO

BRITISH: 27 ships of the line under Admirals Horatio Nelson and Cuthbert Collingwood
FRENCH AND SPANISH: 33 ships under Admirals Pierre-Charles Villeneuve (France) and Federico Gravina (Spain)

WHEN

21 October 1805

WHERE

Cape Trafalgar, south of Cádiz off the south-west coast of Spain.

WHY

The Franco-Spanish fleet attempted to break out of Cádiz past a British blockade.

OUTCOME

British victory. The French and Spanish lost 18 ships captured or destroyed, and at least 3,000 dead. The British lost about 500 men but no ships.

Channel on barges. But before he could attempt such an expedition, he had to gain control of the Channel.

In March 1805, a French fleet under the command of Admiral Pierre-Charles Villeneuve sailed out of Toulon and, after linking up with ships from France's new ally, Spain, made for the West Indies. The plan was to rendezvous with more French ships, creating a fleet large enough to dominate the Channel. Admiral Horatio Nelson, though, was determined to prevent this from happening.

Having searched for Villeneuve's fleet in the Mediterranean, Nelson

gave chase and, by early June, he too was in the Caribbean. The harassed Villeneuve re-crossed the Atlantic but, with Nelson having warned the Admiralty of the French fleet's movements, he was intercepted off Cape Finisterre by an English fleet under Sir Robert Calder. He was forced to turn south and, in September, took refuge in Cádiz.

BATTLE STATIONS

With no fleet to protect his invasion force, Napoleon abandoned his plans to invade Britain and instead moved east to deal with the armies of Britain's allies, Austria and Russia.

Villeneuve, though, was left bottled up in Cádiz, blockaded by a British fleet commanded by Nelson. Three weeks into October, under pressure from Napoleon, Villeneuve finally attempted to break out and sail into the Mediterranean.

Nelson was waiting for him. The well-drilled British crews 'cleared for action', removing anything that might get in the way during the ensuing battle, dousing flammable materials with water and scattering sand on the decks to prevent the men from slipping. Meanwhile, down below, the ships' surgeons were preparing temporary

“Collingwood paced the deck of his ship, calmly eating an apple”

hospitals and laying out the grim tools of their trade.

Once in sight of the enemy, the drummers of the Royal Marines ‘beat to quarters’ – the signal for the crews to take up their action stations. As the British ships closed in on their enemies, Nelson ordered a signal to be displayed aboard his flagship *HMS Victory*: “England expects that every man will do his duty.” Admiral Collingwood, Nelson’s second-in-command, was not impressed. “I do wish Nelson would stop signalling,” he muttered. “We all know well enough what to do.”

In fact, Collingwood’s acerbic comment contained an important truth: Nelson’s captains did indeed know what to do. While off the coast of Spain, Nelson had invited them to dinner on board *Victory* and personally explained his plan for the approaching battle.

Traditional naval tactics would have seen the two fleets deployed in two long parallel lines but, instead, Nelson planned to attack in two columns. One, led by Collingwood, would attack the rear of the enemy line of battle while the other, led by Nelson, would tackle the centre. By breaking the allied line of battle in this way, Nelson would bring about a series of ship-to-ship actions in which the superior British seamanship and gunnery

would prove decisive. It would also force ships in the vanguard of the enemy fleet to turn back to support the ships at the rear, which would take a long time. Finally, he gave his captains freedom of action by telling them: “No captain can do very wrong if he places his ship alongside that of the enemy.”

Such a head-on attack would inevitably expose his ships to a torrent of gunnery with no opportunity to reply. To minimise the damage sustained,

Nelson aimed to close with the enemy as quickly as possible.

He ordered his ships to carry their full complement of sails, and put his largest battleships at the front of his columns. Collingwood’s ship,

the *Royal Sovereign*, was the first into action. It broke the Franco-Spanish line at about noon and fought alone for 20 minutes before the rest of the fleet could join it. Collingwood paced the deck of his ship, ignoring pleas to remove his conspicuous cocked hat. “Let me alone,” he replied. “I have always fought in a cocked hat, and always shall.” He carried on pacing, calmly eating an apple.

As *Victory* approached the enemy line at the head of the second column, she took a heavy battering. Her ship’s wheel was

6,000

Oaks and elms were felled to obtain the wood needed to build *HMS Victory*

ROLL CALL

HMS Victory had a crew of 821 men at Trafalgar. More than 500 were seamen who worked and fought on the ship; of these, 289 were volunteers and 217 had been pressed into service, most of them former merchant seamen. There were also 146 red-coated marines, responsible for the security of the ship and its officers. One in ten of the crew came from outside the British Isles. There were 31 boys on board, the youngest of whom was aged just 12.

QUICKFIRE ROUNDS

The experienced British gun crews were able to fire three broadsides to every two fired by the French and Spanish – a major advantage in the frantic gunfight at Trafalgar.

FIGUREHEAD

This consisted of two cherubs holding the royal arms.

CANNONS

Victory’s guns fired 2,669 rounds of shot, as well as 186 rounds of grapeshot and 35 rounds of double-headed shot.

FIRING LINES

Whereas the French and Spanish usually tried to disable an enemy ship by firing at its masts, the British often fired at an enemy ship’s hull – but accurately judging distance and trajectory took skill and experience.

1,200 METRES
AWAY FROM
THE TARGET



The cannon has to be aimed at the top of the main mast

800 METRES
AWAY FROM
THE TARGET



The cannon has to be aimed at the main crow’s nest

WEAPONS OF MAST DESTRUCTION

HMS Victory carried 104 cannon at Trafalgar. To load and fire one in the heat of battle took training and practice. A fabric or paper cartridge of gunpowder was rammed down the barrel, followed by a rope wad to hold it in place, the shot, then a second wad. A hole in the cartridge was made by pushing a wire pricker into the vent, and gunpowder was poured in. The gun was then fired either by a spark from a flintlock or by a smouldering match held to the vent.

**ROPE
RESTRAINT**

**WHEELED
CARRIAGE**

32-POUNDER CANNON

Named after the weight of the shot it could fire. *Victory* carried 30 of these at Trafalgar.

DIRK

A long dagger carried by midshipmen and used when boarding another ship.

BAR SHOT

Cast-iron bars used to cut rigging and damage spars and sails.

SAILS

HMS *Victory* carried 5,440 square metres of sail.

FOREMAST

The stability of the masts was improved by surrounding them with iron rings and platforms.

FIGHTING TOP

Also called the crow's nest, lookouts or sharpshooters could be posted here.

MAIN MAST

Masts were made of fir, pine or spruce from Norway and the Baltic – light, flexible wood.

MIZZEN MAST

Victory's was shot away during the battle.

UPPER GUNDECK

Carried 12-pounder guns.

MIDDLE GUNDECK

Held 24-pounder guns.

LOWER GUNDECK

Held 32-pounder guns. The crew ate and slept (on hammocks) between their guns.

STORES

Most ammunition and provisions were stored in the lowest part of the ship. HMS *Victory* went through 7.8 tonnes of gunpowder during the battle.

275 TO 360 METRES AWAY FROM THE TARGET



The cannon has to be aimed directly at the waterline

NOCK GUN

Seven-barrelled gun used to fire a volley of musket balls at enemy sailors. It had a fearsome recoil.

BOARDING AXE

Used to cut away rigging and to make a handhold for boarding; also a good close-quarter weapon.

BOARDING PIKE

Kept on the main deck to repel enemy boarders.

SPONGE

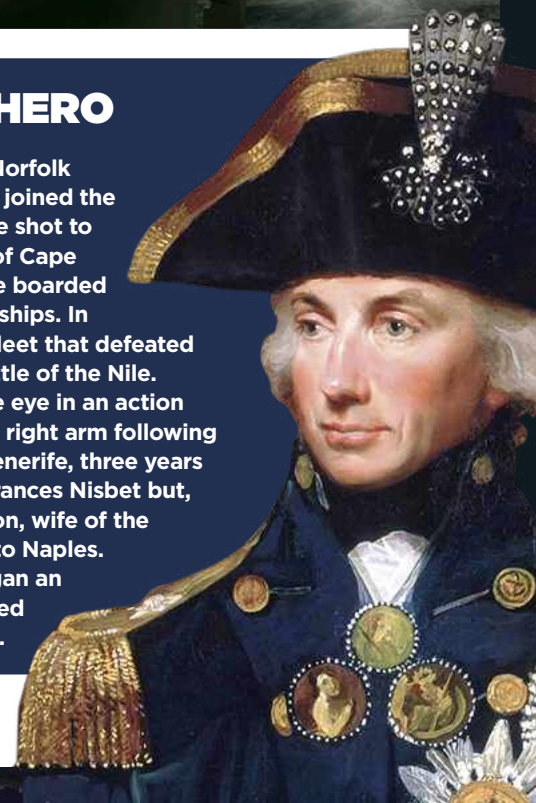
A sheepskin head on a wooden stave, dipped in water; extinguishes embers in a gun barrel.

HMS VICTORY

Built at Chatham, *Victory* was launched on 7 May 1765, making her 40 years old at Trafalgar. Commanded by Captain Thomas Masterman Hardy, she was armed with 104 guns and served as Nelson's flagship during the battle. She had already led fleets in both the American and French Revolutionary Wars, and today is the only surviving 18th-century ship of the line.

A NATIONAL HERO

Born in 1758, the son of a Norfolk clergyman, Horatio Nelson joined the navy at just 12 years old. He shot to fame in 1797 at the battle of Cape St Vincent, during which he boarded and captured two Spanish ships. In 1798, he commanded the fleet that defeated Napoleon's navy at the Battle of the Nile. Nelson lost the sight in one eye in an action off Corsica in 1794, and his right arm following an attack on Santa Cruz, Tenerife, three years later. In 1787, he married Frances Nisbet but, in 1793, met Emma Hamilton, wife of the British envoy to Naples. They later began an affair that lasted until his death.



shot away, but still she kept on coming. As she sailed past the stern of Villeneuve's flagship *Bucentaure*, *Victory*'s well-trained gunners were at last able to fire, unleashing a devastating broadside. Shot smashed through the French ship, disabling 20 of her guns, killing and wounding 200 of her men and effectively putting her out of action.

As more and more British ships came into action, French and Spanish casualties began to mount. Captain Servaux of the French ship *Fougueux* described the effects of one of the *Royal Sovereign*'s broadsides: "Most of the sails and rigging were cut to pieces, while the upper deck was swept clear of the greater number of the seamen working there, and of the soldier sharpshooters."

Sailors suffered horrific wounds. Men were disembowelled or had limbs or heads shot off – a single French cannonball killed eight marines on the poop deck of *HMS Victory*. Balls smashed into decks and bulwarks, tearing off jagged splinters of wood that caused terrible injuries to anyone they hit. Men were crushed by falling spars and masts or loose cannon. Those on the gun decks

were deafened by the noise and blinded by the smoke from their guns but were better off than men on the exposed upper decks.

After dealing with the *Bucentaure*, Nelson's flagship found itself locked in combat with another French ship, the *Redoutable*. While *Victory*'s gunners blazed away below decks, sharpshooters up in the masts of the *Redoutable* opened a withering fire upon the British ship's exposed quarterdeck. Thomas Hardy, *Victory*'s captain, gave the order to take cover but Nelson continued to pace the deck in his distinctive admiral's uniform – and soon the inevitable happened: he was struck in the shoulder by a musket ball that passed through a lung and hit his spine.

Nelson was carried down to the orlop deck in agony and died at about 4.30pm – but not before he'd heard the news that the battle had been won. Seventeen enemy ships had been captured and one had blown up. No sooner had the battle ended than a savage storm blew up, and the British struggled in heavy seas to save their own damaged ships as well as the ships they'd captured. In the end, they saved all of their

"Men were deafened by the noise and blinded by the smoke of their guns"

26

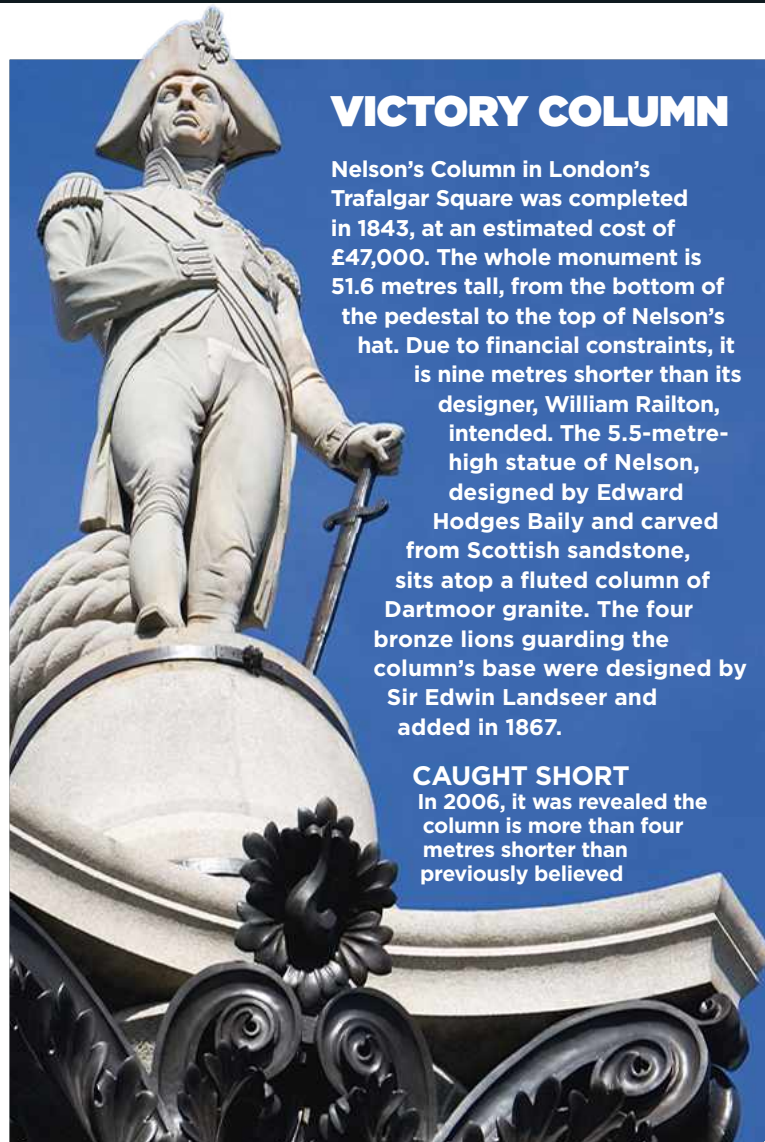
The miles of ropes and rigging used on the three masts of *HMS Victory*

VICTORY COLUMN

Nelson's Column in London's Trafalgar Square was completed in 1843, at an estimated cost of £47,000. The whole monument is 51.6 metres tall, from the bottom of the pedestal to the top of Nelson's hat. Due to financial constraints, it is nine metres shorter than its designer, William Railton, intended. The 5.5-metre-high statue of Nelson, designed by Edward Hodges Baily and carved from Scottish sandstone, sits atop a fluted column of Dartmoor granite. The four bronze lions guarding the column's base were designed by Sir Edwin Landseer and added in 1867.

CAUGHT SHORT

In 2006, it was revealed the column is more than four metres shorter than previously believed



own ships and four of their prizes; the rest sank or were wrecked, or were destroyed by the British to prevent recapture by the French.

Two days after the battle, five surviving allied ships made a daring sortie from Cádiz and managed to recapture two ships. However, one of these was subsequently wrecked, along with three of the rescuers. Finally, on 4 November, four fugitive

allied ships were intercepted and captured in the Bay of Biscay.

When the final ripples of the battle had died away, the allies had lost no fewer than 24 ships out of their combined fleet of 33. No British ships had been lost. 🎯

GET HOOKED!

Find out more about the battle and those involved

EXPLORE HMS VICTORY

Visit Portsmouth's Historic Dockyard to see Nelson's cabin and stand on the spot where he received his mortal wound. www.historicdockyard.co.uk

BOOKS & FILM

Patrick O'Brian's novels of the Napoleonic Wars offer an accurate depiction of naval life. Russell Crowe starred in the 2003 film of *Master and Commander: the Far Side of the World*.

WHAT HAPPENED NEXT?

Britain ruled the waves – despite Napoleon's plans

The immediate effects of Trafalgar were relatively minor. Napoleon had already relinquished his plan to invade England and instead headed eastwards, crushing Britain's allies Russia and Austria at the Battle of Austerlitz in December. But the long-term impacts were massive. The Royal Navy now ruled the oceans unchallenged, so could protect Britain from invasion, continue its blockade of French ports, shield trade interests, and support military operations across the globe. Hoping to create a navy that could once again challenge the British, Napoleon instituted a large shipbuilding programme, but fell from power before it could be completed. He returned from exile to lead his army to a decisive defeat at Waterloo in June 1815.

AT THE DOUBLE
Napoleon defeated Russia
and Austria at Austerlitz



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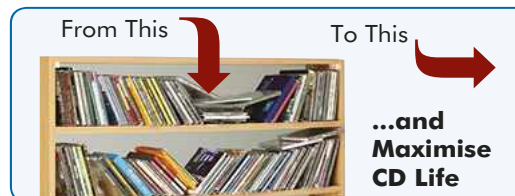
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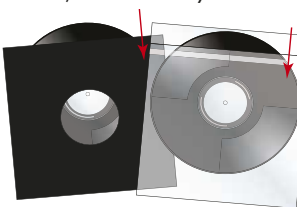
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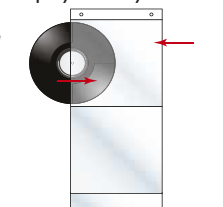
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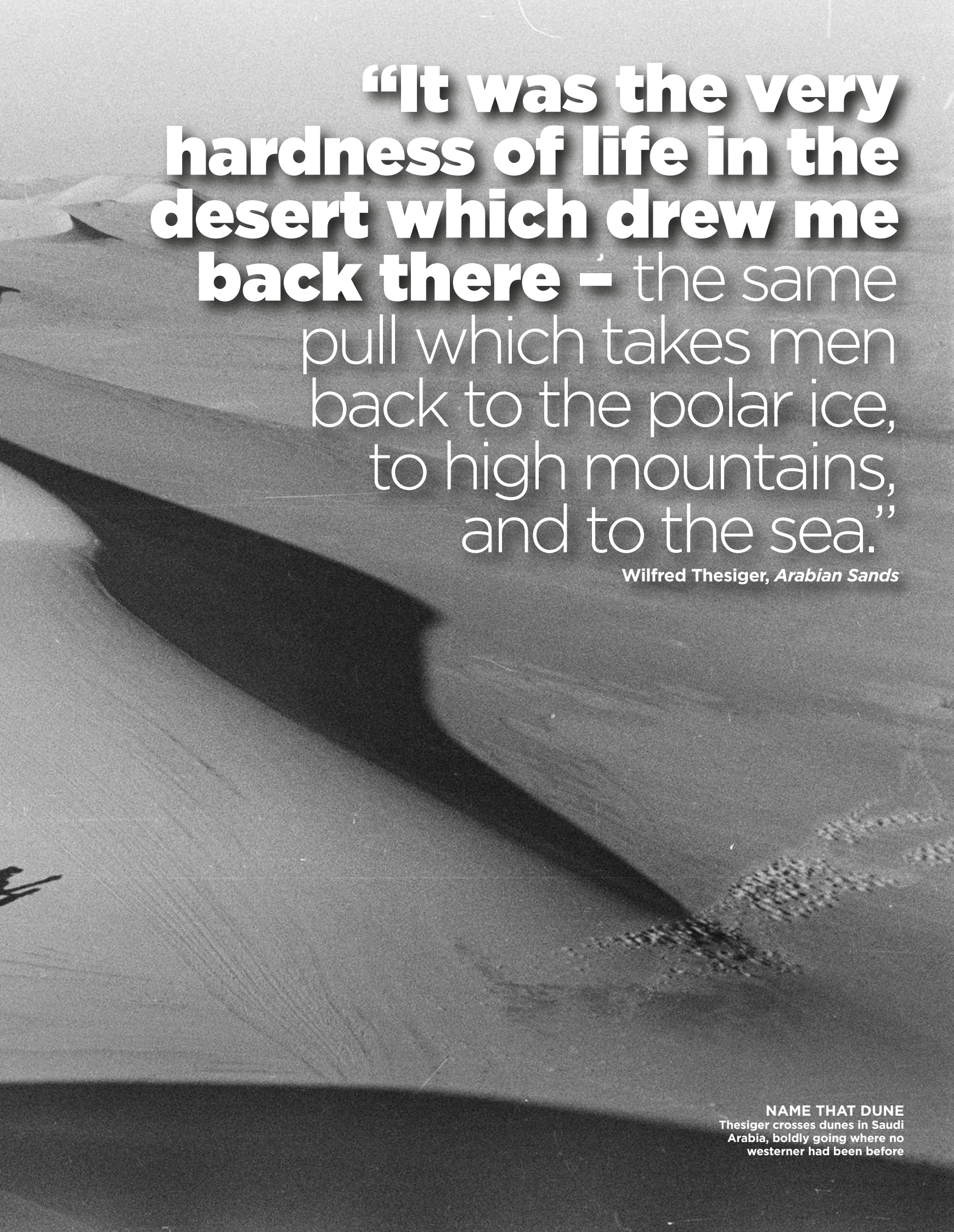
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WILFRED THESIGER: ACROSS ARABIA'S EMPTY QUARTER

The vast, sandy Rub' al Khali repelled explorers for centuries, but one iron-willed English pioneer refused to let the desert beat him, as **Pat Kinsella** recounts



**“It was the very
hardness of life in the
desert which drew me
back there –** the same
pull which takes men
back to the polar ice,
to high mountains,
and to the sea.”

Wilfred Thesiger, *Arabian Sands*

NAME THAT DUNE
Thesiger crosses dunes in Saudi
Arabia, boldly going where no
westerner had been before



By the mid-20th century, with footprints left across even the most inhospitable polar regions, many people believed that there was nothing left to discover on Earth. Humans would soon start looking beyond our own planet for new worlds to explore – yet one vast patch on the terrestrial world map remained blank: an immense sea of sand rolling across 250,000 square miles of the southern Arabian Peninsula.

In Arabic, this region is known as Rub' al Khali: the 'Empty Quarter', sprawling across swathes of modern-day Saudi Arabia, Oman, the United Arab Emirates and Yemen. Hardy Bedouin tribespeople are its only habitual inhabitants, but somewhere within its enormity, a great metropolis once thrived – the fabled lost city of Ubar, dubbed the 'Atlantis of the Sands' by TE Lawrence. At the end of World War II, virtually nothing was known about the Empty Quarter – something that an eccentric English explorer set out to put right.

SON OF THE DESERT

Wilfred Thesiger was born in Ethiopia in 1910, the son of a British diplomat, and spent his early childhood in Africa. Ostensibly the archetypal product of Imperial England's tweed-clad class, he attended Eton and Oxford, where he earned his Blue as a champion boxer. A noted big-game hunter, he was decorated for bravery during a military career that included a stint with the SAS.

Despite his privileged background, Thesiger's adult existence was a life less ordinary, largely spent in uncomfortable conditions. He spurned Western society, preferring the company of indigenous guides wherever he was exploring. His adventures took him to live with the Marsh Arabs in southern Iraq, documenting a community that has since been annihilated. He also travelled through Iran, Kurdistan, French West Africa and Pakistan, and lived in northern Kenya, but it's for his Arabian

exploits that he is most remembered – in particular, his double traverse of the Empty Quarter.

Though he didn't start writing for publication until late in life, and even then with reluctance, he's regarded as a pioneer of experiential travel journalism. Thesiger's image collection is an invaluable record of traditional lifestyles that have since become endangered or extinct.

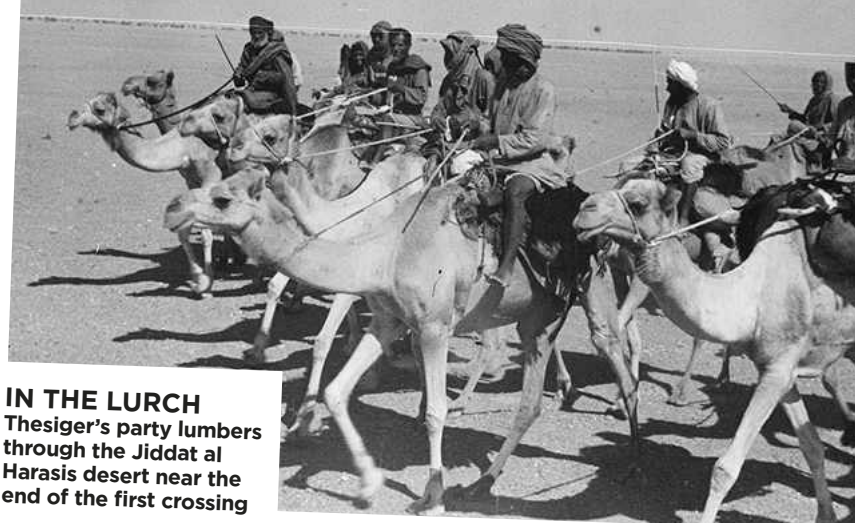
Thesiger wasn't the first Westerner to cross Rub' al Khali. English civil servant and scientist Bertram Thomas traversed one part of the Empty Quarter during 1930–1, and author, explorer and sometime intelligence officer Harry St John Philby (father of the infamous double agent Kim Philby) traipsed across another in 1932, searching for Ubar, the legendary lost, frankincense-rich city of antiquity.

But it was Thesiger who first thoroughly explored this last, vast, sand-obscured spot on the world map – twice, in fact. And it was Thesiger who mapped the few features of this gritty wilderness, including Liwa Oasis (now in Abu Dhabi) and the quicksands of Umm as Samim in Oman.

In 1945, the Middle East Anti-Locust Unit (MEALU) hired

Thesiger to search for locust breeding grounds throughout the region, essentially paying the explorer to roam around southern Arabia, accompanied by Bedouin tribesmen. On expedition, Thesiger travelled only by foot (barefoot, at that) or camel, constantly battling heart-breaking thirst, murderous raiding parties of bandits, quicksands, towering dunes, relentless exposure and the ever-present threat of starvation.

Thesiger undertook multiple trips in Saudi Arabia, Yemen and Oman, and on



IN THE LURCH
Thesiger's party lumbers through the Jiddat al Harasis desert near the end of the first crossing

GEOGRAPHY

The Empty Quarter is the world's largest sand desert. Distances between water sources are vast, with oases and wells easy to miss. For three days during his 1946–7 expedition, Thesiger lay thirsty and starving on a sand dune while his Bedouin guides searched for sustenance.

3 LAYLA

From Layla, the north-westernmost point of the expedition, the party turns east towards Abu Dhabi.



2 SULAYYIL

Thesiger's party is arrested and guides chained after entering Saudi Arabia illicitly. Only when St John Philby intervenes are they released and the expedition able to continue.

THE MAIN PLAYERS



WILFRED PATRICK THESIGER

When 'Mubarak bin London' returned to Arabia in 1977 after a long absence, he was horrified, describing modern Abu Dhabi as "an Arabian Nightmare, the final disillusionment".



SULTAN BIN AHMAD

Bayt Kathir Bedouin sheikh who joined Bertram Thomas on his 1930–1 Empty Quarter crossing. Left Thesiger after a dispute at Ramlat al Ghafah.



HARRY ST JOHN PHILBY

Explorer, writer and Foreign Office agent who completed the second-ever Empty Quarter crossing.



SALIM BIN KABINA

Closest of Thesiger's Bedouin companions, the teenage Rashid Bedouin accompanied Thesiger on his second Empty Quarter expedition.

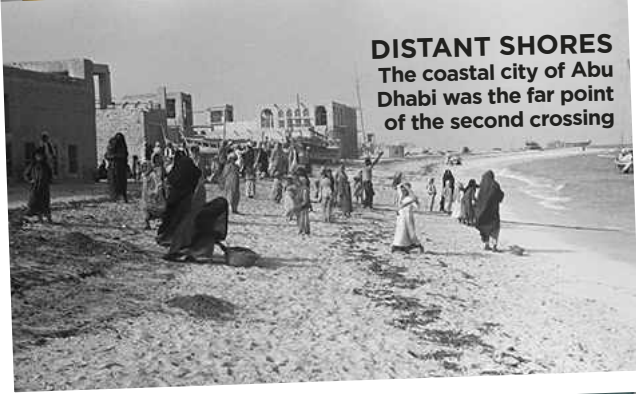
70
Number of lions Thesiger shot in Sudan (he was commissioned to do so, to save herdsmen from attack)



GUIDING LIGHT
Sadr, one of Thesiger's two Sa'ar Bedouin guides, surveys the landscape from a dune



DISTANT SHORES
The coastal city of Abu Dhabi was the far point of the second crossing



IRAN



PERSIAN GULF

5 ABU DHABI

On 14 March 1948, Thesiger and his team reach the coast and the city of Abu Dhabi to complete the crossing.

5 ABU DHABI

In mid-December, Thesiger and his party enter the territory of Abu Dhabi, from where they travel towards the border with Oman.

4 LIWA

Crossing the treacherous salt flats of Sabkhat Mutti, Thesiger's party reaches Liwa Oasis in the emirate of Abu Dhabi in early March 1947.

6 BAI

Thesiger is reunited with the members of his party he had left behind to look after the injured Mahsin bin Khuzai.

4 RAMLAT AL GHAFAH

Sultan bin Ahmad, senior leader of the Bayt Kathir Bedouin, argues with Thesiger and turns around. The diminished party, now with just four Bedouin, continues the expedition.

1 MANWAKH WELL, YEMEN

On 17 December 1947, Thesiger sets off on his second journey across the Empty Quarter, aiming to traverse the western stretches.

3 MUGHSHIN OASIS

Mahsin bin Khuzai falls from his camel, breaking his leg. The party splits - one group stays with the injured man, the other pushes further into the Empty Quarter.

2 SHISR

Thesiger has secretly arranged to meet more Rashid Bedouin guides including Salim bin Kabina at this small well in Dhofar. Sir Ranulph Fiennes and some archaeologists later claim this as the site of the legendary lost city of Ubar.

7 SALALAH

On 23 February 1947, Thesiger and his party reach the Arabian Sea at Salalah to complete their journey.

1 SALALAH

On 25 October 1946, Thesiger's expedition leaves Oman's southern port city with the Wali of Salalah's blessing to journey as far as Mughshin Oasis.

SAUDI ARABIA

OMAN

YEMEN

INDIAN OCEAN

ARABIAN SEA

THE EMPTY QUARTER
(RUB'AL KHALI)

'URUQ AL ZAZA



MANWAKH

MUGHSHIN OASIS

JIDDAT AL HARASIS

SHISR

SALALAH

Ma' Shadid

Ghanim Sands

Yisub

Wadi al 'Ayn

Wadi Hawshi

Baynunah

Ramlat ar Rabbad

Sabkhat Mutti

Dhiby Well

Jabrin Oasis



GREAT ADVENTURES WILFRED THESIGER

25 October 1946, he left Oman's southern port city of Salalah to attempt a camel crossing of the eastern sands of the Empty Quarter – something no Western explorer had done before.

The region was trembling with tribal tensions, but Thesiger was accompanied by several Rashid and Bayt Kathir Bedouin, and had permission from the Wali (governor) of Salalah to travel as far as Mughshin Oasis at the desert's southern edge. The party crossed the Qarra mountains and traced wadis (dry valleys) to the wells at Ma' Shadid and Shisr. At the latter spot, Thesiger had secretly arranged a rendezvous with more Bedouin, with the intention of pushing on into the heart of the Empty Quarter.

At Mughshin, however, disaster struck: Mahsin bin Khuzai, leader of the Rashid Bedouin party, fell from his camel and broke his leg. Thesiger had to split the group, leaving the injured man with one contingent and continuing with the rest of the Bedouin into the Ghanim Sands. Thesiger and Sultan bin Ahmad, the leader of the Bayt Kathir Bedouin party, then had a dramatic disagreement. The senior Bedouin demanded the expedition turn around, but four of the party stayed with the Englishman.

Ascending the sand mountains of the 'Uruq al Shaiba with their camels – the beasts driven to recalcitrance and rebellion by thirst, hunger and exhaustion – was the crux move of this eastern traverse. The party was desperately short of water and, if they failed to drag themselves across these monstrous dunes, almost certain death awaited. For several days, the Englishman lay on the brink of physical collapse, but the skilful Muhammad al Auf negotiated a route and the bedraggled group continued across the Suhul al Kidan and Al Batin sands.

Thesiger skirted the south of Liwa Oasis in mid-December, continuing through Abu Dhabi to reach the border at Wadi al 'Ayn. Back in Oman, the expedition followed the stony wadis of the Ad Dhahirah and Ad Dakhiliyah regions. At Bai, Thesiger was reunited with the men he'd left behind to care for the injured Mahsin bin Khuzai. Together they crossed the stony desert, passing

once more through the Qarra mountains and arriving back in Salalah on 23 February 1947.

A week later, Thesiger was on his camel again, travelling through southern Oman and Yemen. He completed one more trip for the locust-busters that year, to Saudi Arabia, but then ceased working for MEALU. Thereafter, he would bankroll his own expeditions.

ARABIAN FIGHTS

By December 1947, the Empty Quarter was calling again. He was accompanied on his next expedition by Salim bin Kabina, along with his brother, two other Rashid Bedouin and a pair of Sa'ar Bedouin guides. Tribal violence was still rife in this, the most desolate environment on Earth. The few oases that exist in the Empty Quarter had seen violent attacks from raiding parties on various groups, while the presence of an English infidel was seen as poisonous by many tribes. Thesiger's inclusion of the Sa'ar men was a calculated safety precaution, as members of that tribe had already stated that they would follow his party into the desert and slay them all. The region's tribes knew Thesiger was in possession of money and good rifles, and two killing parties were also sent in pursuit of his group by a leader of the Dahm people.

Undeterred (and to some extent unaware), Thesiger attempted a western traverse of the Empty Quarter. It was only the speed at which they travelled that saved him from the chasing assassins. The party set off from Manwakh well in Yemen and travelled north-west across the sands of 'Uruq az Zayza into Saudi Arabia – a huge risk, because the King, Ibn Saud, had already rejected Thesiger's request to enter the country. Crossing Al Jaladah plain, they reached the Saudi government post of 'Ayn al Hassi in mid-January. Yam men they encountered expressed hatred of Thesiger, as a Christian, and disgust for his companions.

Shortly afterwards, they were arrested by the Wali of Sulayyil, where Thesiger's Bedouin guides were bound in chains. The Englishman fretted that their captors would chop off his companions' hands, but fellow explorer St John Philby, a confidant of Ibn Saud,

FEET OF ENDURANCE

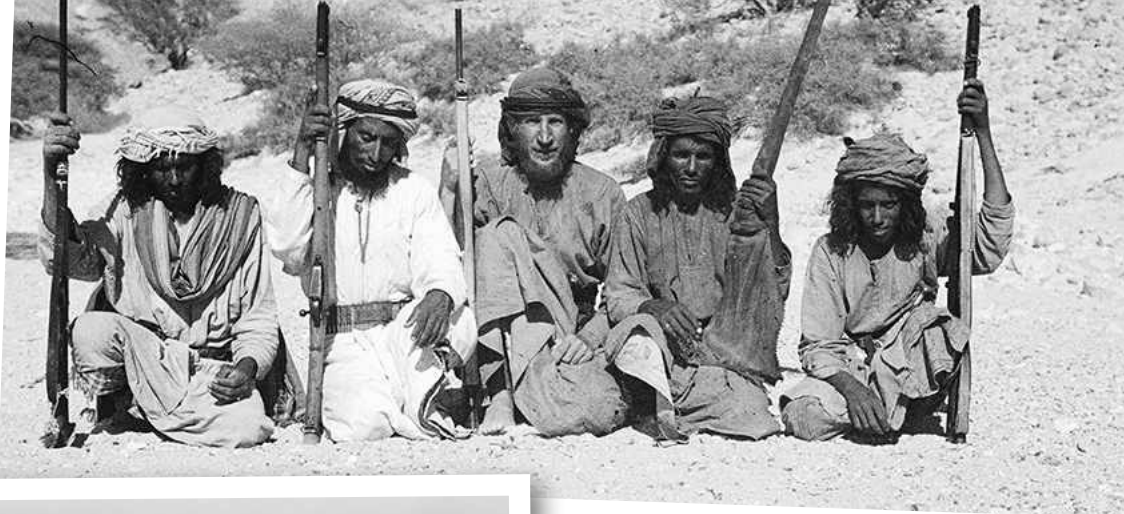
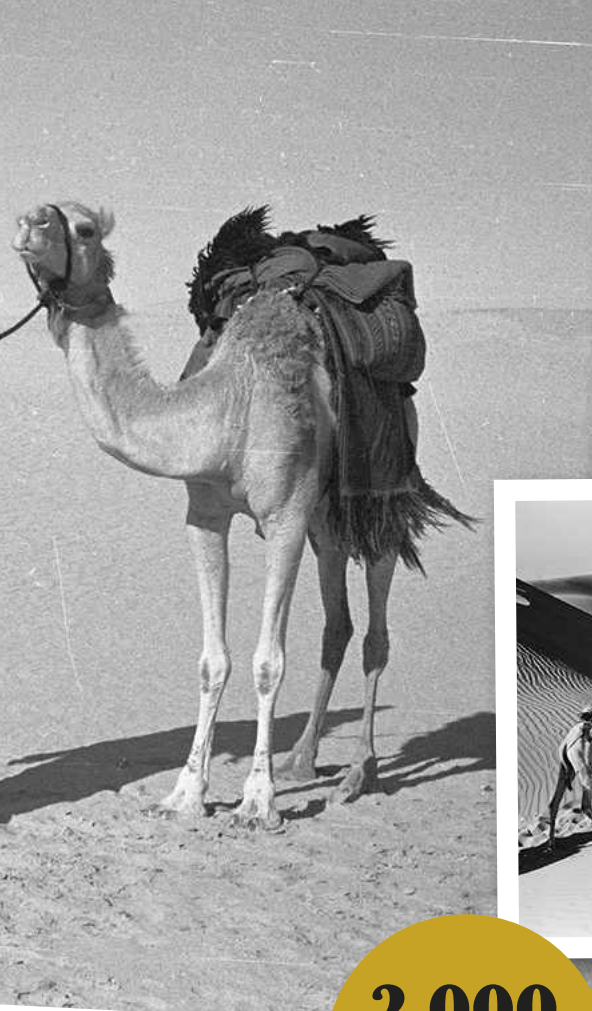
RIGHT: A barefoot Thesiger leads his camel to Abu Dhabi on his second Empty Quarter crossing

BELOW: Salim bin Kabina proudly holds the service rifle given to him by Thesiger (at right)

MAIN: The party stops at Dhiby Well in Saudi Arabia to water the camels during the second crossing



“The man who despised cars sold his maps to the oil companies.”



2,000

Distance in miles covered on the first crossing of the Rub' al Khali by Thesiger in his barefeet

GUNNING FOR GLORY

TOP: Thesiger's four companions on his first Empty Quarter crossing – Mabkhaut bin Arbain, Musallim bin Tafl, Muhammad al Auf and Salim bin Kabina – pose with rifles

ABOVE: Tackling dunes on the second crossing

intervened. The King released them, granting permission for the expedition to proceed, with Philby joining them for a short time.

Thesiger continued north to Layla before crossing the Jawb al Badu to Jabrin Oasis. A harrowing journey to Dhiby Well followed, during which the group endured freezing conditions and constant life-threatening hunger. Negotiating the desolate saltflats of Sabkhat Mutti and passing through Al Dhafra, they eventually arrived in Al Batin sands, turning north from Liwa to reach the coast and Abu Dhabi on 14 March 1948.

BLACK GOLD

It was here the irresistible black tide washing across the sands of Arabia first lapped the adventurer's feet. Back in the Empty Quarter in 1946, Thesiger had lain, paralysed with hunger, on a sand dune for three days, experiencing hallucinations of motorised vehicles carrying him to safety. He'd decided then that he "would rather be here starving as I was than sitting in a chair, replete with food, listening to the wireless and dependent on cars to take me through Arabia".

Yet, the man who opposed oil exploration, fearing it would destroy the Bedouin way of life he so admired, met executives from the Iraq Petroleum Company. He made no secret of his views but, ultimately, chose to work with them to finance his future expeditions.

So, in the end, the man who despised cars sold the information he'd collected and maps he'd made during his travels to the oil industry. In doing so, he helped these companies proceed on the path that would forever alter the face of his beloved Arabia. 🎯

GET HOOKED

BOOK

Thesiger's *Arabian Sands* (1959), a classic of modern travel and adventure writing, details his two Empty Quarter expeditions.



WHAT DO YOU THINK?

Did Thesiger's journeys leave a legacy he could be proud of, or would the desert have been better off left alone?

Email: editor@historyrevealed.com

Tombstone

Jonny Wilkes explains why the legendary shoot-out at the OK Corral was not the simple good-vs-bad clash that the 1993 film suggests

The bustling new town of Tombstone, Arizona, was flooded with the sounds of gunfire for just 30 seconds on 26 October 1881 – but the cracks of the 30 shots fired would echo through history as one of the Old West's most iconic moments.

The shoot-out at the OK Corral – between five members of the outlaw band known as the Cowboys, three of whom died, and the lawmen Wyatt Earp, his brothers Virgil and Morgan, and Doc Holliday – has been immortalised in several films, most famously *Tombstone* (1993). In nearly all depictions of the shoot-out – including the daily re-enactment staged to delight tourists in the town today – the Earps are the noble enforcers of law and order, while the Cowboys are violent thieves and murderers who get what they deserve. The truth of the OK Corral gunfight, however, is far more complex.

CLASH WITH COWBOYS

The opening narration of *Tombstone* introduces the Cowboys, a ruthless brotherhood of cattle-rustlers and killers who can be identified by their red sashes. The Cowboys did exist – they were thought to number more than 200 – but they were not the organised band portrayed in the film. Rather, they worked in small groups to commit petty crimes, and there is no evidence that they wore red sashes.

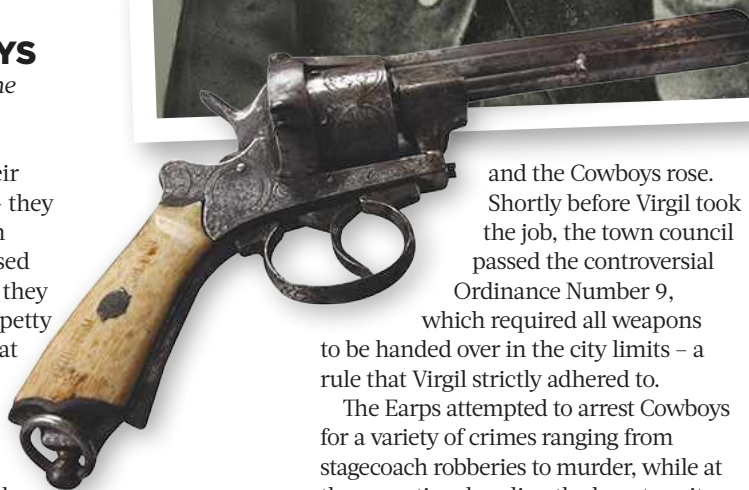
Wyatt, Virgil, Morgan, James and Warren Earp (the latter two don't feature in *Tombstone* and took no part in the gunfight) moved to the silver-mining community around 1879 seeking fortune. They were soon joined by John Henry 'Doc' Holliday, who hoped that the warm weather would help ease the tuberculosis from which he suffered.

For two years, the Earp brothers habitually clashed with the Cowboys. When Virgil was made town marshall in June 1881, tensions between the Earps



DOWN TO EARP

In the film, when Wyatt Earp first arrives at Tombstone he is insistent that he wants no job in law enforcement. The real Wyatt applied for several jobs, including as a **shotgun guard on stagecoaches**, and was deputy sheriff of Tombstone a year before the gunfight.



and the Cowboys rose. Shortly before Virgil took the job, the town council passed the controversial Ordinance Number 9, which required all weapons

to be handed over in the city limits – a rule that Virgil strictly adhered to.

The Earps attempted to arrest Cowboys for a variety of crimes ranging from stagecoach robberies to murder, while at the same time bending the laws to suit their own business interests in town. Both sides were culpable of dodgy dealings and illegal behaviour, but the Earps' image has been protected – mainly because they were the ones wearing the tin stars of law enforcement. Wyatt, in contrast with his reputation as the legendary lawman of Tombstone, had previously been a gambler, saloon owner and pimp as well as a law enforcer in other towns,

THE FACTS

Release date: 1993

Director:

George P. Cosmatos

Cast:

Kurt Russell, Val Kilmer, Sam Elliott, Powers Boothe, Michael Biehn, Bill Paxton, Dana Delany

"I was only ever mixed up in one shooting – just one. But a man lost his life, and I took it. You don't know how that feels – and believe me, boy, you don't ever want to know."

MAIN: Doc Holliday (Val Kilmer), Virgil (Sam Elliott), Morgan (Bill Paxton) and Wyatt Earp (Kurt Russell) head out to disarm the Cowboys
LEFT: Wyatt, photographed c1883, and the pistol that he kept in Tombstone's Oriental Saloon

and was cultivating similar opportunities in Tombstone. He was also at loggerheads with Cochise County Sheriff Johnny Behan over a woman, Josephine Marcus, despite being married himself.

30 SECONDS, THREE DEAD

At around 3pm on 26 October 1881, the tension boiled over. That morning, Virgil and Wyatt had each pistol-whipped a Cowboy in the face of threats to their lives, notably from another Cowboy, Ike Clanton. By the afternoon, Virgil was concerned that the Cowboys in

THE COWBOYS' REVENGE

In *Tombstone*, the retaliatory attacks on Virgil and Morgan by the Cowboys occur immediately after the shoot-out, but Virgil was actually ambushed **two months after the gunfight** at the OK Corral and Morgan was killed in March 1882.

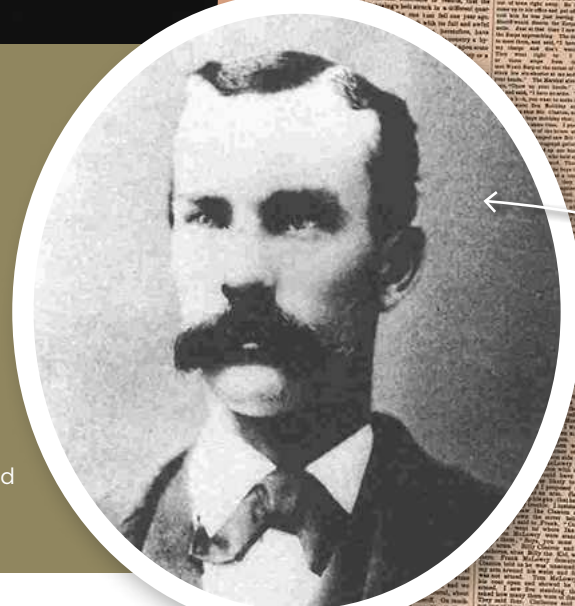
“Wyatt, rather than being a legendary lawman, had been a gambler, saloon owner and pimp.”

CONFLICT OF INTERESTS

The two newspapers in Tombstone engaged in a war of words in the aftermath of the gunfight. *The Tombstone Epitaph* **took the side of the Earps** – its editor, John Clum, supported Virgil's actions as law enforcer – while *The Nugget's* version of events was wildly different, being more sympathetic to the Cowboys.

“You tell 'em I'm coming, and hell's coming with me, you hear? Hell's coming with me!”

RIGHT: The only known photograph of Cowboy Johnny Ringo
FAR RIGHT: The front page of *The Tombstone Epitaph* the day after the shooting. It writes: “The Marshal was entirely justified in his efforts to disarm these men, and that being fired upon they had to defend themselves, which they did most bravely.”



KNOW THY ENEMY

In the film, the chief villain of *Tombstone*, Johnny Ringo, was well-educated and **quipped with ease in Latin**. However, there is no real evidence that he was an intelligent man, nor even that he was one of the Cowboy leaders.

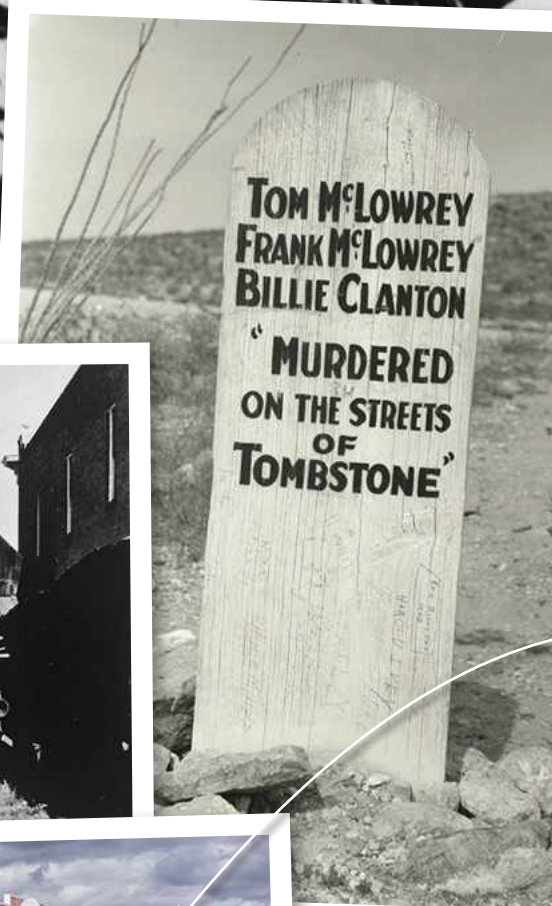
THE REEL STORY GUNFIGHT AT THE OK CORRAL

PUBLIC DISPLAY

The citizens of Tombstone could observe the **bodies of the three dead Cowboys** when they went on show in the window of Ritter and Ream Undertakers.

“The fighting’s commenced. Get to fighting or get away”

MAIN: The bodies of (left to right) Tom McLaury, Frank McLaury and Billy Clanton before their burial
RIGHT: The gunfight didn’t actually take place at the OK Corral but on a lot beside Fly’s Photographic Studio
FAR RIGHT: The dead were buried in Tombstone’s Boot Hill Cemetery. Some 2,000 people gathered to watch the funeral procession



PIECE OF HISTORY
With the streets of Tombstone restored to look like the Old West, the town is a must for tourists

from what happened at the OK Corral, but from subsequent events. The Earp brothers

and Doc were arrested for murdering the three men and it was only after a month-long hearing – during which Wyatt and Doc spent 16 nights in jail – that they were cleared.

Late on the evening of 28 December 1881, Virgil was ambushed on a Tombstone street by shooters hiding in a nearby building. He lost the use of his arm, but his assailants escaped arrest even though he was able to identify them. Nearly three months later Morgan was shot in the back and killed while playing billiards. When the perpetrators

town hadn’t given up their firearms, so he collected a shotgun and rounded up Wyatt, Morgan and Doc, now all deputised as lawmen. Together they walked to the small lot near the OK Corral to confront and disarm Ike and Billy Clanton, Tom and Frank McLaury, and Billy Claiborne, who were allegedly scheming to kill Doc and the Earps.

The two groups were standing only two or three metres apart when the shooting started. Who shot first is unclear, but straight away Frank McLaury was hit in the belly by a bullet from Wyatt. Doc blasted Frank’s brother Tom in the chest with a shotgun, which he then discarded for his favourite nickel-plated revolver to finish off Frank with a shot to the head. Morgan was injured by a single bullet that struck both shoulder blades and his spine, but he continued firing, as did Virgil, who picked up a wound in

the calf. The third Cowboy fatality, Billy Clanton, was shot multiple times, while his brother Ike and Billy Claiborne fled, screaming that they were unarmed. The fight lasted just 30 seconds.

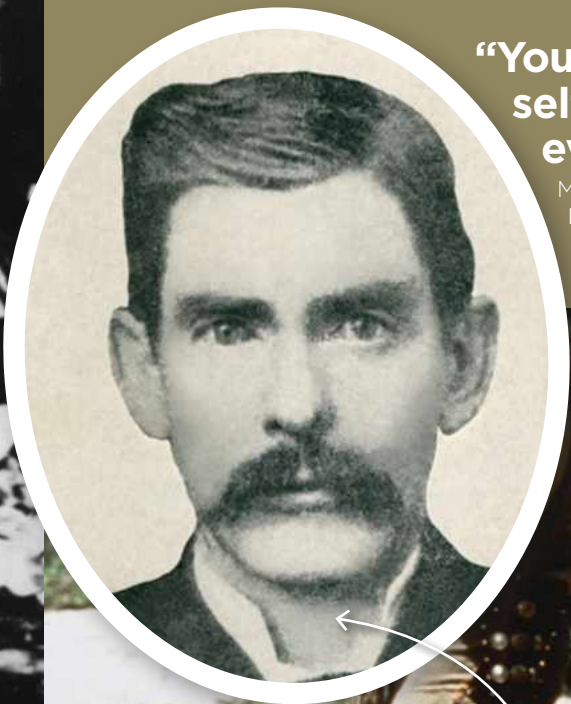
The headline of the following day’s *Tombstone Epitaph* newspaper read: “Three men hurled into eternity in the duration of a moment.” The folk of Tombstone were initially on the side of the Earps, but the Clantons and McLaury were popular, and some 2,000 people watched the funeral procession for Billy (19), Tom (28) and Frank (33).

RIDING FOR REVENGE

Films such as *Tombstone* generally depict Wyatt as the central hero figure. His name is the best known of the men involved in the gunfight and has become synonymous with frontier justice and integrity. That reputation came not

“You’re the most fallible, stubborn, self-deluded, bull-headed man I’ve ever known in my entire life.”

MAIN: Doc Holliday (Val Kilmer) accompanied his friend Wyatt Earp (Kurt Russell) on his vendetta ride following the attacks on Wyatt’s brothers
LEFT: Holliday had suffered from tuberculosis since 1873. When he died, aged 36, his final, enigmatic words were allegedly: “Damn, this is funny”.



THE NAME ON THE TOMBSTONE

The Arizona town got its unfortunate name from prospector Ed Schieffelin, who discovered silver in the area in 1877. He had been told that **all he would ever find was his own tombstone**, so he named the community after that joke. In the four years before the gunfight, the population of the town grew from nothing to 7,000.

WHAT’S UP, DOC?

Doc Holliday is played with mischievous panache by Val Kilmer in *Tombstone* as a **feared gunslinger and marksman**. Some accounts, though, claim he wasn’t a very good shot: in nine shoot-outs he killed only three men.

were again not prosecuted, Wyatt turned his back on the legal system and formed a posse. From 20 March to 15 April, with Doc riding alongside him, Wyatt pursued the men responsible. In *Tombstone*, this ‘vendetta ride’ is portrayed as almost a one-man war against the Cowboys in which dozens are gunned down and the criminal gang is crippled, with Wyatt frantic to kill the leader, Johnny Ringo. In reality, Earp’s posse killed just four men. His was not a noble crusade for justice but a personal vendetta.

Wyatt’s quest for vengeance is the reason he gets top billing in any account of the events that took place in Tombstone. His reputation kept growing, especially after the publication of *Wyatt Earp: Frontier Marshall*, written by Stuart Lake with Wyatt’s collaboration shortly before his death in 1929. In the book, the Clantons and McLaurys are the bad guys while the Earps represent true bastions of frontier justice – an image that suited

Hollywood films perfectly. Wyatt became a hero, played by the likes of Henry Fonda, Burt Lancaster and *Tombstone*’s Kurt Russell, and the story has been told in a variety of romanticised interpretations. *Tombstone* is a thrilling film, with a scene-stealing performance by Val Kilmer as Doc, but it is certainly a melodramatic telling of the tale.

We’re still waiting for a historically accurate version of what happened, but a small bronze plaque in *Tombstone* attempts to show the Cowboys as something more than just the bad guys. It is dedicated not to the Earps or Doc but to the dead McLaurys, and reads: “One owes respect to the living, but to the dead one owes nothing but the truth.”



WHAT DO YOU THINK?

Were the Earps the good guys or did they abuse their powers to commit murder?

Email: editor@historyrevealed.com

Ones to watch: the OK Corral

My Darling Clementine

(John Ford, 1946)

An even more romanticised tale of the shoot-out, starring Henry Fonda as Wyatt Earp.

Hour of the Gun

(John Sturges, 1967)

James Garner gives a wonderful portrayal of Wyatt’s descent from lawman to vigilante hell-bent on vengeance.

Wyatt Earp

(Lawrence Kasdan, 1994)

Released just after



Kevin Costner in the titular role of the 1994 epic

Tombstone, this epic western starring Kevin Costner claims to be the most accurate cinematic portrayal of events.



Want to enjoy more history? Our monthly guide to activities and resources is a great place to start

HERE & NOW

HOW TO VISIT... GOTHIC CHURCHES 90 • BOOKS 94

ON OUR RADAR: 2015 SPECIAL

Looking ahead to the big events of the coming year...

ANNIVERSARY

Napoleon's downfall at Waterloo

On 18 June 1815, in the fields around Waterloo, the Duke of Wellington's armies delivered a crushing, if tragically costly, **defeat to Napoleon Bonaparte** and his French forces.

Next year, the 200th anniversary of the historic battle will be marked by a series of events, including a commemorative service at **St Paul's Cathedral**, an impressive exhibition at Windsor Castle containing objects seized from the battle, military pageants and mass re-enactments on the original battlefield.

To keep updated on news of the anniversary, go to www.waterloo200.org



The forces commanded by the Duke of Wellington (bottom right) killed around 25,000 French troops in one day

FILM

Testament of Youth

In cinemas 16 January 2015

Based on Vera Brittain's best-selling memoir, a valuable piece of **classic World War I literature**, the coming drama *Testament of Youth* follows a young Vera (Alicia Vikander) as she gives up university to serve as a **nurse in wartime Britain**.

All the while, she longs for the safe return of the love of her life, Roland (played by *Game of Thrones* star Kit Harington).



EXHIBITION

Plague, fire and revolution

The National Maritime Museum tells the story of the **famous diarist** living in a time of turmoil, Samuel Pepys.

From 20 November 2015, more at www.rmg.co.uk

TWITTER

Wicked Workshops @WWfun

Fun, educational and interactive, Wicked Workshops offer a first-rate historical experience **for children**. Keep up-to-date with their workshops on their Twitter.





VIDEO GAME

Total War: Attila

With the crumbling **Western Roman Empire** under attack from one million horsemen under **Attila the Hun**, will you be able to repel the relentless horde in the latest thrilling instalment of the award-winning *Total War* series? *Released next year, available on PC, £39.99*



The new series sees Ragnar set his sights on Paris

TV

Return of Ragnar

Vikings

History, airing 2015

After the huge popularity of the first two series, it was no surprise to hear that *Vikings* was renewed by History for a **third chapter**.

Details are sparse about what fans can expect but the legendary Ragnar (Travis Fimmel) is back and just as determined to **conquer new lands** for his family and for glory. Rather than just plunder England, the new ten-part series sees him sail his warriors across the water and invade Paris.



FILM

Marching on

Selma

In cinemas 6 February

Released on the 50th anniversary of a landmark year for Civil Rights in America, *Selma* follows the crucial **marches from Selma, Alabama, to Montgomery**

in early 1965, months before the Voting Rights Act.

English actor **David Oyelowo** gives a stirring performance as Civil Rights icon Martin Luther King, facing danger and prejudice to ensure black Americans had the right

The biopic traces David Oyelowo's Martin Luther King (centre) throughout his protest campaigns in 1965

to vote. Among the stellar ensemble is cinema stalwart Tom Wilkinson as President Johnson and Oprah Winfrey – also a producer of the film.

Selma, directed by Ava DuVernay, promises to be an **absorbing drama** and a strong awards contender.

CONCERT

In honour of Churchill

Every year, a concert is held as a memorial to the life of Sir Winston Churchill. As 2015 marks 50 years since the war leader's death, this concert holds special significance. **At Blenheim Palace, 29 May 2015. For more information, go to www.churchillmemorialconcerts.org**

FESTIVAL

Chalke it up

The successful **Chalke Valley History Festival**, which began in 2011, is returning for another huge year of talks, re-enactments and a warbird air show. **22-28 June 2015, more info at www.cvhf.org.uk**

ANNIVERSARY

Magna Carta

Throughout 2015, there will be events celebrating the **800th anniversary** of the signing of the Magna Carta. **Lincoln Cathedral** will play an important role as it holds one of the four remaining original copies of the iconic document. **Updates will be made at magnacarta800th.com**



A copy of the Magna Carta with the seal of King Edward I

▶ ALSO LOOK OUT FOR

- ▶ There are two more milestone anniversaries in 2015 – the first is the 70th anniversaries of VE and VJ Day, when World War II ended.
- ▶ The second is the 600th anniversary of the Battle of Agincourt. Events can be found at www.agincourt600.com

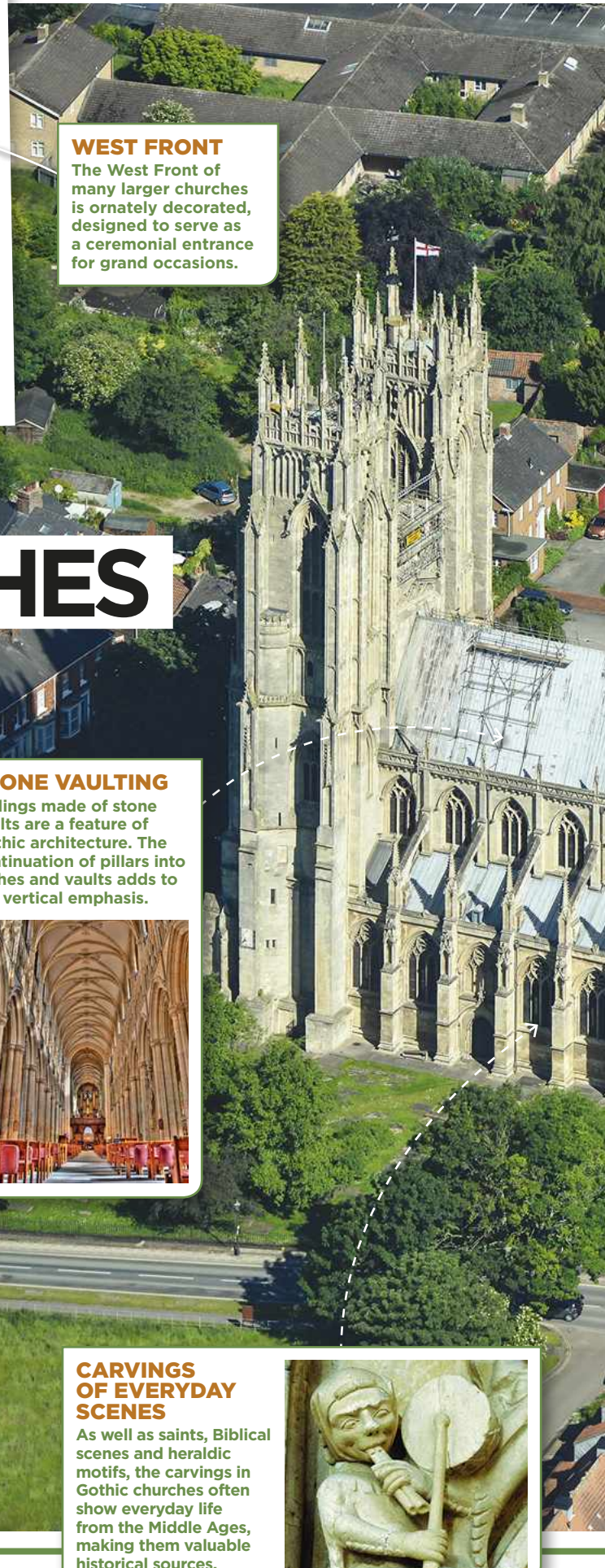
GRAND ENTRANCE

Beverley Minster is noted for its majestic twin towers



WEST FRONT

The West Front of many larger churches is ornately decorated, designed to serve as a ceremonial entrance for grand occasions.



HOW TO VISIT...

GOTHIC CHURCHES

Rupert Matthews explains how medieval builders combined theological purity with architectural innovation to produce some of Britain's finest buildings...

The Gothic style is dramatic, detailed, awe-inspiring – and that's no accident. Used most prominently in churches and cathedrals, it was intended to play on the emotions and lead humans to a better understanding of God.

The heart of the Gothic style is the pointed arch, developed in northern France around 1120. At first, the new arch was used only in windows, but it later formed the frame for doors, arcades and entire buildings. Sometimes several arches were joined to form vaulted ceilings.

The new style spread rapidly across Western and Central Europe, with each region adding its own distinctive features.

Gothic builders wanted to produce a building with an overwhelmingly vertical emphasis to carry the eye up toward God. The pointed arch helped, but Gothic churches were also tall and narrow, often two or even three times as tall as they were wide. Pillars and pilasters climbed through several storeys both inside and out, repeating the vertical theme.

By about 1300, the craftsmen erecting these churches made the structure a skeleton of columns, tracery and vaults supporting the roof. This allowed the spaces to be filled with glass, flooding the interior with God's sunlight.

Until about 1260, the Early English Gothic had simple lines with carvings taking the form of stylised foliage. Then came the Decorated Gothic, featuring elaborately curved window tracery, boldly carved pillars and elaborate vaulting. From 1350, the Perpendicular Gothic placed even greater emphasis on vertical lines and large windows. After about 1480, the Gothic was replaced by Tudor architecture.

And why 'Gothic'? The style was given this name as an insult by later architects who favoured a new Classical style based on that of Ancient Greece and Rome.

TURN OVER...

for six of the best Gothic churches to visit

STONE VAULTING

Ceilings made of stone vaults are a feature of Gothic architecture. The continuation of pillars into arches and vaults adds to the vertical emphasis.



CARVINGS OF EVERYDAY SCENES

As well as saints, Biblical scenes and heraldic motifs, the carvings in Gothic churches often show everyday life from the Middle Ages, making them valuable historical sources.



BEVERLEY MINSTER

East Yorkshire

Larger than many cathedrals, Beverley Minster (officially the Parish Church of St John and St Martin) was begun in 1220 after a fire destroyed an earlier shrine dedicated to St John of Beverley, who founded a monastery here in the early 8th century. The church took over 200 years to finish but was completed to the original design – though the later towers followed a Perpendicular Gothic style rather than the Early English original. Its vast size and ornate appearance is due to the fact that it was a richly endowed collegiate church. beverleyminster.org.uk

MISERICORDS

The undersides of wooden seats in stalls and elsewhere are often carved with elaborate scenes and figures – this one in Beverley Minster depicts a drummer.



PINNACLES

Soaring pinnacles enhance the vertical lines but also provide extra stability, directing weight downwards to counteract outward thrust from the internal vaulting.

ROSE WINDOW

Round windows, subdivided by ornate stone tracery, are often filled with stained glass.

EMPTY NICHES AND MISSING STATUES

During the 16th-century Reformation, hundreds of 'idolatrous' statues were removed, leaving empty niches.

PILASTERS

False columns attached to walls emphasise the vertical lines and provide support for vaulting.

LARGE WINDOWS WITH STONE TRACERY

Medieval clerics believed that natural light was divine, so commissioned increasingly large windows in churches.

GARGOYLES

Waterspouts, often carved into animal or human shapes, divert rainwater from the roof away from the walls to protect them from damp.



SIX OF THE BEST GOTHIC CHURCHES



TOMB IT MAY CONCERN
The chancel of St Mary's, Bottesford, contains the tomb of two children reputedly killed by witchcraft.

ST MARY THE VIRGIN, BOTTFESFORD *Leicestershire*

At 64 metres tall, the soaring spire of this 15th-century church can be seen for miles and has gained it the nickname 'Lady of the Vale', lying as it does in the Vale

of Belvoir. The interior is packed with huge and ornate tombs of the local Manners family, Earls and Dukes of Rutland.
www.stmarysbottesford.co.uk

ALL SAINTS, GRESFORD *Wrexham*

An altar to the Roman goddess Nemesis shows this to be an ancient holy site, but the present church dates to the 13th and 15th centuries. The medieval misericords are magnificent – one shows the Devil pushing a wheelbarrow of sinners into Hell – but it is the peal of eight bells dating from 1714 that has made the church famous.
www.allsaintsgresford.org.uk



ST PETER'S, TIVERTON *Devon*

This outstanding 15th-century church has large side chapels adorned with elaborate carvings of local people and events. The fine organ dates to 1696 and is

famed as the instrument on which Mendelssohn's *Wedding March* was first played, on 2 June 1847.
www.britainexpress.com/counties/devon/churches/tiverton.htm

ST GEORGE'S, ESHER *Surrey*

One of the last Gothic churches to be erected in England, St George's was built in the 1540s – one of the earliest to be built after the Reformation. In the 1720s, the Duke of Newcastle, who lived

nearby, hired Sir John Vanburgh to build an extension, with classical columns, pediments and other details, which sits oddly alongside the original church.
www.stgeorgeseshesher.org

DUNFERMLINE ABBEY *Fife*

In 1150, King David I of Scotland granted abbey status to an existing priory church at Dunfermline. It grew to be one of the largest, richest and most ornate in Scotland, before being sacked by Protestants in 1560. The nave survived the destruction and subsequently served as the town's parish church. The transepts and chancel were rebuilt in 1821.
www.dunfermlineabbey.co.uk



ST AUGUSTINE'S, DERRY/LONDONDERRY

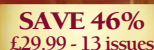
In about AD 546, St Columba founded a small monastic settlement on the banks of the River Foyle. That monastery later became the centre of a town that grew into Derry/Londonderry.

The original church was rebuilt several times, and the current neo-Gothic structure, dating back only as far as 1872, was built by local architect John Ferguson.
www.saintaugustines.co.uk



THE NEW OLD
St Augustine's was built in 1872 in neo-Gothic style

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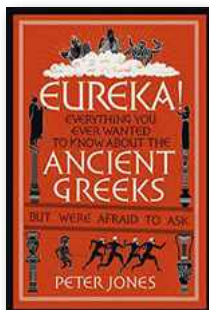


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BOOKS

BOOK OF THE MONTH

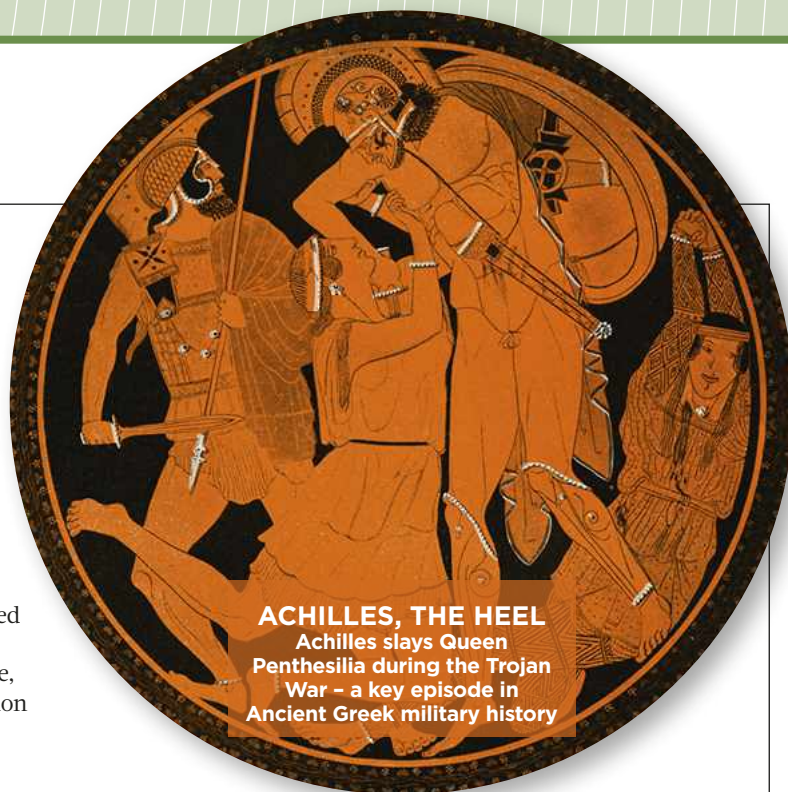


Eureka! Everything You Ever Wanted to Know About the Ancient Greeks but Were Afraid to Ask

By Peter Jones

Atlantic Books, £19.99, 384 pages, hardback

What was life like for ordinary people in Ancient Greece? What did they do for fun? What did other cultures think of them? These are some of the questions Peter Jones tackles in this lively and varied miscellany charting the rise of the Greek empire, its military successes, leading cultural figures and far-reaching legacy: the alphabet, architecture, democracy, geometry – the list goes on. If you're looking for an introduction to the world of the Ancient Greeks, this is a great place to start.



ACHILLES, THE HEEL
Achilles slays Queen Penthesilia during the Trojan War – a key episode in Ancient Greek military history



MEET THE AUTHOR

Peter Jones reveals that the Ancient Greek world was a magnificent, diverse and quarrelsome crucible of ideas that influenced every aspect of our lives today

“Greek culture was very much not neat or uniform”

Why did you write this book?

In my previous book, *Veni Vidi Vici*, I explored Roman history period by period. Each chapter started with a brief summary, then explored a wide variety of brief ‘nuggets’ expanding on the details. That seemed a successful way of examining both the wood and the trees – and if it

worked for the Romans, why not the Greeks? Hence, *Eureka!*

How did you decide what to include from this vast period?

The challenge was to combine the story of the autonomous Greek city-states (of which there were about 1,000 at any one time) until their subjugation by

Rome together with the massive Greek contribution to western civilisation. This contribution is huge: the ideas of history, philosophy, comedy, tragedy, biology, atomic theory, democracy...

What are our biggest misconceptions about this period?

It's all too easy to reduce the story of Ancient Greece down to just the city of Athens. For us, Athens in the fourth and fifth centuries BC seems to have been the centre of a world overflowing with ideas that were enormously influential in shaping our lives today. Yet the Greeks who lived on the coast of western Turkey were in contact with eastern cultures, and had a major role in developing many of those ideas. For example, Homer, arguably the first true author of

the Western world, came from that region.

What was the thing that most struck you when you were writing the book?

The Greeks' admirable passion for the independence of their own city-states led to almost constant fighting between them. Yet, because they were always looking for the best possible outcome in a battle, each would often form an alliance with another that, just the week before, had seemed their most bitter enemy. In the Persian wars, for instance, more Greeks fought for Persia than for Greece!

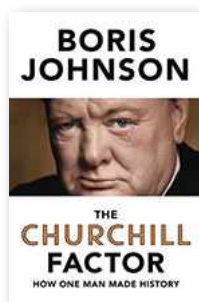
With what view of the Ancient Greeks would you like to leave readers?

Greek culture was very much not single, neat or uniform. As the historian Diodorus said, “If any man were to examine carefully the most famous schools of [Greek] philosophers, he would find them differing from one another to the uttermost degree.” And it wasn't just the philosophers, either – they were all at it.



GREEK SALAD DAYS
Athens in its pomp boasted magnificent sites, including the Acropolis

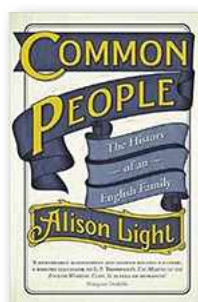
THE BEST OF THE REST



The Churchill Factor: How One Man Made History

by **Boris Johnson**
Hodder and Stoughton, £25, 416 pages, hardback

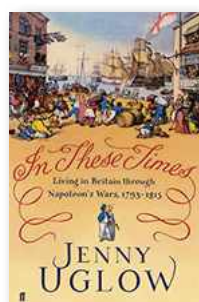
Mayor of London Boris Johnson is your guide to the life of Winston Churchill in this warm, witty biography. Packed with fascinating stories and ideas, from exploring Churchill's formative childhood experiences to imagining World War II fought without him, this is one of the most entertaining history books of 2014.



Common People: the History of an English Family

by **Alison Light**
Fig Tree, £20, 352 pages, hardback

Skilfully blending genealogy with social history, Alison Light's exploration of the lives of several generations of her ancestors follows a cast of vivid characters as they negotiate the social upheavals of the 19th century. It's both deeply personal and hugely insightful about the wider history of Britain.



In These Times: Living in Britain Through Napoleon's Wars, 1793-1815

by **Jenny Uglow**
Faber and Faber, £25, 752 pages, hardback

Napoleon is one of history's most famous figures, and the wars he waged against the UK took place on an epic scale. But what impact did they have on people in Britain? From rich to poor, Scotland to London, butchers to bankers, this book vividly captures their stories.

READ UP ON...

POST-WAR GERMANY

BEST FOR... UNDERSTANDING THE ROOTS

Germany: Memories of a Nation

by **Neil MacGregor**
Allen Lane, £30, 640 pages, hardback



This compelling book, published to accompany a new exhibition at the British Museum and written by its director, picks a series of key objects and ideas that offer insights into today's Germany – sometimes surprising but always fascinating.

BEST FOR... THE BERLIN WALL

The Berlin Wall: 13 August 1961–9 November 1989

by **Frederick Taylor**
Bloomsbury, £10.99, 528 pages, paperback



What was it like to wake up to find a barrier separating you from your family and friends? At the heart of Taylor's book, and the Cold War, is a city of four million people divided in two, and this poignant account tells the stories of those people.

BEST FOR... AN OVERVIEW
Goodbye to All That? The Story of Europe Since 1945

by **Dan Stone**
Oxford University Press, £25, 416 pages, hardback



Dan Stone's sweeping, magisterial account of post-war Europe is brilliant both on the effects of the conflict and Germany's place in the continent over the years that followed. It's sometimes a complex story, but Stone tells it captivatingly.

CAPITAL IDEAS

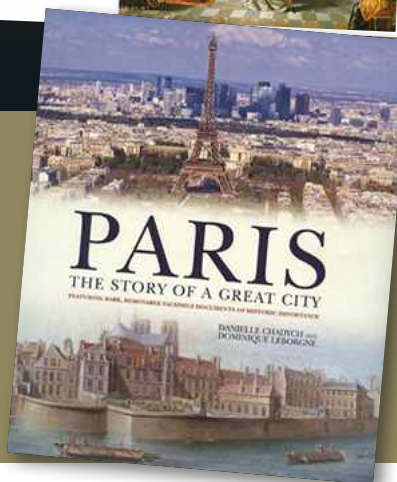


PARIS IN PICTURES
A treasury of illustrations and paintings illuminates this immersive history of the City of Light

Paris: the Story of a Great City

By **Danielle Chadych and Dominique Leborgne**
Andre Deutsch, £20, 160 pages, hardback

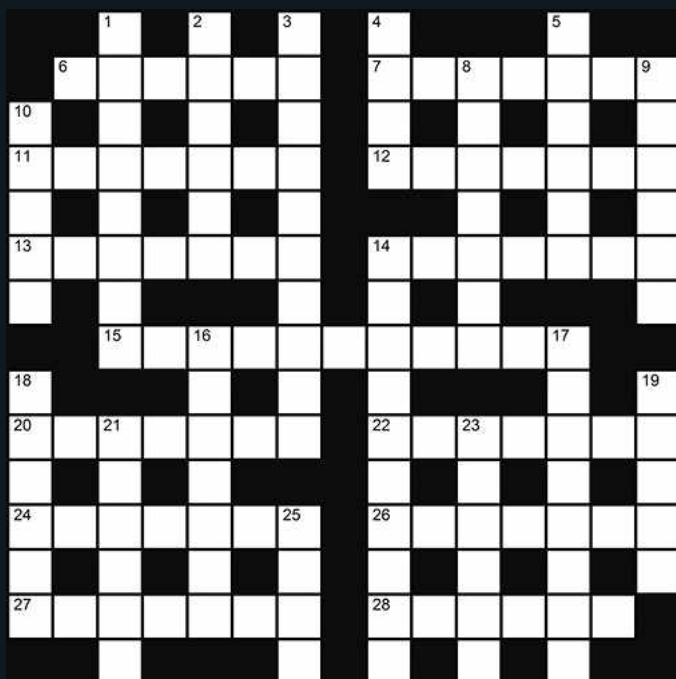
Step virtually into the streets of Paris with this richly illustrated book featuring highlights from the archives and museums of the French capital. From the Roman conquest and the influential architecture of the Middle Ages to the French Revolution and Napoleon's rule, there's plenty to explore in this expanded new edition.



CROSSWORD N° 11

Test your knowledge of world history with this month's crossword, and you could win a prize

Set by Richard Smyth



ACROSS

- 6** Greek lyric poet, born on the island of Lesbos (6)
7 Ancient Semitic language that still exists today, once widely spoken in the modern-day Middle East (7)
11 "America can not be an ____ with its head in the sand", from a speech made by President Woodrow Wilson in 1916 (7)
12 Belgian town known to the Romans as Turnacum (7)
13 ____ Friedrich Ludwig (1797-1888), the first Emperor of Germany (7)
14 French novelist, most famous for *Gigi* (1944) (7)
15 Semi-mythical Roman soldier and Christian martyr - and slayer of a dragon? (5,6)

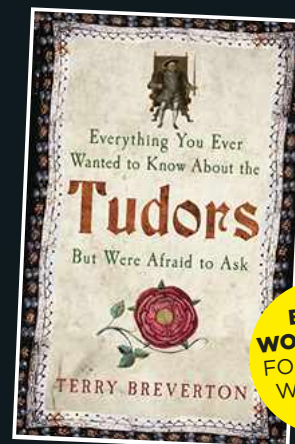
- 20** Mexican city seized by Pancho Villa in 1914 (7)
22 Colonel Sir George ____ (1790-1866), Welsh-born surveyor after whom a mountain was named (7)
24 British ____, major car manufacturing corporation founded in 1968 (7)
26 Deadly disease that struck Britain in 1831 (7)
27 Julia ____ (b.1961), first female Australian Prime Minister from 2010-13 (7)
28 Sacred scripture of the Zoroastrian faith (6)

DOWN

- 1** Pioneering submarine by 18th-century American inventor Robert Fulton (8)

- 2** Member of a Gnostic sect in the Roman Empire during the second century (6)
3 District of south-west London, home to Parkstead and Downshire Houses (10)
4 William Howard ____ (1857-1930), 27th President of the United States (4)
5 Only son of William Shakespeare and his wife Anne Hathaway (6)
8 Grace ____ (1816-47), English novelist who published several works on Jewish history (7)
9 Black Sea peninsula, a war zone in the 1850s and still the scene of tensions (6)
10 Frederick ____ (1901-88), Austrian- American composer, known for his work with lyricist Alan Jay Lerner (5)
14 Georges ____ (1841-1929), French premier, nicknamed 'Le Tigre' (10)
16 An ancient Japanese art of flower-arranging, meaning 'living flowers' (7)
17 The century in which William the Conqueror was born and died (8)
18 German term for a prisoner-of-war camp (6)
19 Jack ____, one of the three leaders - along with Wat Tyler and John Ball - of the Peasants' Revolt of 1381 (5)
21 Kansas City ____, Missouri-based professional baseball team founded in 1969 (6)
23 Anti-ship missile used to sink HMS *Sheffield* during the Falklands War (6)
25 Flightless bird, hunted to extinction by the end of the 17th century (4)

FOR THREE WINNERS...



BOOK WORTH £20 FOR THREE WINNERS

Everything You Ever Wanted to Know About the Tudors But Were Afraid to Ask

by Terry Breverton
 A light-hearted and entertaining compendium of wonderful facts about the most enduring royal dynasty in British history: the Tudors.
 Published by Amberley Publishing, £20.

HOW TO ENTER

Post entries to **History Revealed, Christmas 2014 Crossword, PO Box 501, Leicester LE94 0AA** or email them to **Christmas2014@historyrevealedcomps.co.uk** by noon on **7 January 2015**. By entering, participants agree to be bound by the terms and conditions shown in the box below. Immediate Media Co Ltd, publishers of *History Revealed*, would love to keep you informed by post or telephone of special offers and promotions from the Immediate Media Co Group. Please write 'Do Not Contact IMC' if you prefer not to receive such information by post or phone. If you would like to receive this information by email, please write your email address on the entry. You may unsubscribe from receiving these messages at any time. For more about the Immediate Privacy Policy see the box below.

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The closing date and time is as shown under **How to Enter**, above. Entries received after that will not be considered. Entries cannot be returned. Entrants must supply full name, address and daytime phone number. Immediate Media Company (publishers of *History Revealed*) will only ever use personal details for the purposes of administering this competition, and will not publish them or provide them to anyone without permission. Read more about the Immediate Privacy Policy at www.immediatemediacompany.co.uk/privacy-policy.

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closing date. If the winner is unable to be contacted within one month of the closing date, Immediate Media Company Bristol Limited reserves the right to offer the prize to a runner-up. Immediate Media Company Bristol Limited reserves the right to amend these terms and conditions or to cancel, alter or amend the promotion at any stage, if deemed necessary in its opinion, or if circumstances arise outside of its control. The promotion is subject to the laws of England. Promoter: Immediate Media Company Bristol Limited

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ON SALE 8 JANUARY 2015

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1066

ENGLAND'S BIGGEST YEAR

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DISAPPEARANCES Q&A **AND MUCH MORE...**

HISTORY
REVEALED Bringing the past to life



BE MY GUEST

Every issue, we ask a well-known personality to choose five guests from history to invite to their fantasy dinner party. This month's host is stand-up comedian **Lucy Porter**

ANITA LOOS

She wrote *Gentlemen Prefer Blondes*, one of the finest comic novels ever written. I'd liked to have had both her talent and her life. She's probably the woman I wished I'd been. She lived through the 1920s and '30s, which, if I could have lived in any period in history, that would have been it. They seemed to live wild, riotous lives - it was all champagne, parties and glorious orgies.

JOSEPH STALIN

I read a biography of Stalin a few years ago - purely because I saw the cover and thought "Wow, I really fancy the young Stalin". It's always interesting to see what makes a psychopath tick. I think he'd be a lot of fun as a guest - drunk, I imagine, and hopefully dancing on the table, throwing vodka around. Every good dinner party needs that.

MAYA ANGELOU

An incredibly inspiring poet and novelist. *I Know Why The Caged Bird Sings* was a book I adored in my teens. I found it beautiful and moving, it opened a whole world I'd never thought about. It kindled a desire for social justice. I think she and Stalin could only be good for each other as I feel she could guide him back to the righteous path.



ISAAC NEWTON

I recently wrote a play called *The Fair Intellectual Club*, set in the early 18th century. For it, I ended up researching Newton's life and works. I'd always known he was the father of modern science, but didn't realise what a complex character he was. I'm not sure he would be a particularly pleasant fellow at dinner, but fascinating nonetheless.

**"I THINK STALIN
WOULD BE A LOT
OF FUN - DRUNK,
AND DANCING
ON THE TABLE,
THROWING
VODKA AROUND"**

JANIS JOPLIN

We'd have karaoke which, with her amazing voice, she'd lead. Someone who'd been at Woodstock would be great to have. If people are going to bore you with festival stories, at least she could talk about the original and best. If I hadn't lived in Hollywood in the 1930s, I'd have fancied living like her in San Francisco in the 1960s. In fact, I could have done both...



Lucy Porter will be touring her latest show *Me Time* from January onwards. More details can be found at www.lucyporter.co.uk

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Shomei Tomatsu *Steel Helmet with Skull Bone Fused by Atomic Bomb, Nagasaki 1963* (detail)
© Shomei Tomatsu – Interface, Courtesy Taka Ishii Gallery